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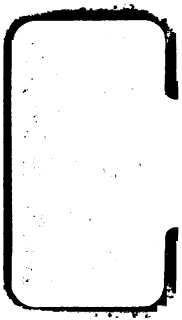

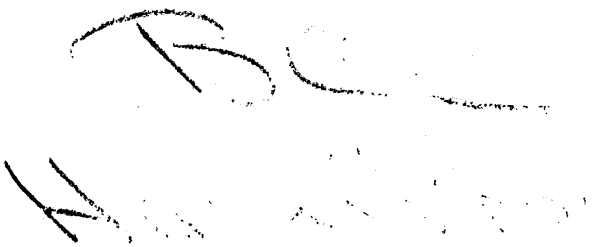

ORIENTAL ZIGZAG

AUTOTYPE. S S.B. & Cº

CHARLES HAMILTON.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS MAULL & Cº PICCADILLY.

ORIENTAL ZIGZAG

OR

WANDERINGS IN SYRIA, MOAB, ABYSSINIA, AND EGYPT

BY

CHARLES HAMILTON

AUTHOR OF "LIFE AND SPORT IN SOUTH-EASTERN AFRICA"

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY FRITZ WALLIS FROM ORIGINAL SKETCHES BY THE AUTHOR

LONDON

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY

1875

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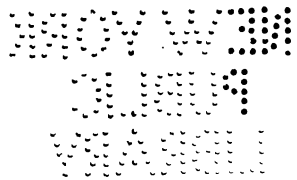

TO MY FAITHFUL FRIEND,

F. G. H. PRICE, ESQ.,

I dedicate

THIS RECORD

OF

TWO YEARS OF TRAVEL IN THE EAST.

C. H.

LONDON,
October, 1874.

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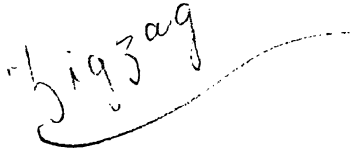
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PHILÆ

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CHAPTER I.

ALEXANDRIA.

My stay here did not extend over a week; and I cannot say that I was much gratified with this famous Eastern port. In company with my friends, Mr. Mundy, of Derbyshire, and Mr. Thellusson, I sought to while away the time in visiting the various places of amusement,—of which there are not many; but my only agreeable reminiscence is of the German Singing Rooms, at which the music is executed on stringed instruments by women from Trieste; and I must not omit to note, as well worthy of the traveller's patronage, one or two coffee-houses kept by very beautiful Spanish ladies. These offer a bright contrast to the surrounding establishments, of which Arabs—principally Algerians—are the proprietors; who have a mixed idea of making coffee

combining the fashion of Algeria, which is French, with the Turkish mode of flavoring.

Some of the streets are filthy in the extreme, and our only marvel was how the inhabitants contrived to escape the cholera. Very remarkable is the Greek quarter of the town, with its dreadful hovels sheltering its fearfully degraded population. Here one is oppressed with a peculiar faint odour, which we found no difficulty in tracing to the environment of vast establishments of wire-hided Maltese pigs; which are maintained in spite of the Mussulman abhorrence of the unclean animal. Against the Greek element, indeed, remonstrance would be of no avail in Alexandria. The Greek is the only nation that the Egyptian dreads. Upon the most trifling provocation or insult from a Mahommedan, the Greek does not hesitate to fillet him at once; and the consequence is that the Arab, fully alive to his antagonist's resolute ways, carefully avoids getting into disputes with him. Notwithstanding this radical opposition of race, however, it is curious to remark that the Greeks largely employ themselves as money-lenders to the Arabs, and act as small bankers to them. With the exception of the French, they are the only people who ever get their loans repaid; and, in explanation of the success of the French in that section of commercial life, it is only necessary here to observe that the French Consulate are wont to make most extraordinary demands when payments of money are not faithfully observed.

As a matter of course, we strolled through the Bazaars for the purpose of making those few purchases which

travelling humanity at large seems to be quite unable to do without. Amber beads and beautiful Circassian fabrics were submitted to us by the Arabs at most exorbitant rates. Profiting by previous experience, we offered just a quarter of the sums demanded; upon which our traders readily came to terms; and even then we had the satisfaction of subsequently ascertaining that we had given twice too much for our bargains.

In the evening we visited a quarter in Alexandria, where are to be found the old Egyptian dancing-women.

At the bottom of a frightfully precipitous and forbidding-looking doorway, whence issued odours by no means to be confounded with Sabean, we were severally presented with a kind of rush-light candles. Following our Nubian guide, we found ourselves in a filthy room, in which were visible eight women, whom we presumed to be fast asleep, though whether they were so or awake we could not accurately tell, their faces being enveloped in yashmaks. Be the state of their somnolency what it may, however, the Nubian lost no time in rousing the ladies to a proper sense of our requirements by distributing tremendous kicks all around him. The effect was magically instantaneous. The poor creatures started to their feet and began dancing. After indulging in the saltatory exercise for about a quarter of an hour, the usual demand of payment ensued. It happened that we did not hurry in this particular; whereupon two huge Arab bullies, evidently belonging to the establishment, made their appearance, and in broken English framing "Baksheesh" enforced the demand. We gladly complied

with the condition of our release, the smell of the place being such that we determined not to see any more of the ballet. The dress of the dancing-women, I may add, consisted of loose Turkish trousers, palpably dirty at the bottom, and a kind of tight-fitting jacket encircling the shoulders. They were exceedingly ugly, and extremely thin; the latter characteristic being easily accounted for by the poverty of the food they get, which, it may easily be understood, is not likely to be over-nutritious in such a dear Eastern town as Alexandria, where imported food rules at almost famine prices.

The night was very dark; and, as in both the Greek and the Arab quarters of the town lamps are suspended only here and there,—before the door of an Armenian merchant or of some private household of position,—we soon lost our way; and the perils of an unlighted district were unfortunately realised by myself in being engulphed in a tremendous bog which lay in the centre of the street for the reception of all the filthy garbage of the neighbourhood. My loud cries for help to be extricated from this unpleasant situation attracted the attention of a passing Turkish khavass, who speedily came up and, exclaiming *Botel! Botel!* (Nasty! Nasty!), assisted in dragging me out. He afterwards informed me that, if I had been an Arab, he would have locked me up for walking about the streets without a lantern. No Oriental, indeed, dare be abroad without one; and I have seen this place fitfully curious and picturesque with the variety of hand-lanterns carried by the inhabitants after dark, ranging from the graceful Algerian lanterns, which I

take to be the most beautiful of all lanterns, to the quaint paper lanterns bought from ships newly arrived from China. This regulation of lantern-carrying, the reader will not fail to reflect, but serves to illustrate the benevolently paternal character of the Viceroy's rule. Knowing the moral worth of Self-help, he requires his subjects to supply their own wants in the way of street illumination.

A few minutes may be profitably spent among the Arab cook-shops here. I saw fish of all sorts and sizes being cooked, and crowds of Arabs hurrying to purchase their piastre's worth, and running off with their acquisitions in their little copper plates.

The Armenians are a very wealthy community; and they seem to thrive here under the Viceroy's rule better than in any other of the dependencies. They are a highly educated people; and they certainly are the best dressed in Egypt, importing their fashionable habiliments from England, where they are disposed to think Nicoll of Regent Street is the supreme artist in the sartorial line. Previous to the defeat of the French by the Germans, Paris was the emporium whence they derived their fashionable toggery: London has now succeeded to that distinction. They number several very accomplished pianistes in their body; they sing well; they talk well; in fact, they are generally great linguists: and I am puzzled to reconcile these evidences of elegant minds and refined manners with the geographical fact of Armenia's remoteness from the civilising influences operating on the rest of the world. As an example of their social

weight and influence, I may adduce the case of Nuba Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who originally was an Armenian and a Turkish slave. This man once was accredited to London, where he was very well treated, and I believe he owes much to England in respect of his subsequent elevation. He is a very plausible official, but, as I should take it, somewhat evasive. The delegates employed by him in the course of public business are mostly Armenians; and I have no hesitation in saying that they are superior even to English detectives in the careful arrangement of matters to suit their own ends.

We visited the Pasha's Gardens, which, being a mixture of weeds and straggling flowers, did not evoke our enthusiasm beyond reasonable bounds. But I must own to having seen here the loveliest carnations I ever set eyes on. These flowers had been brought, I was told, from Portugal; and my experience of the interior of Portugal confirmed the truth of the information. The varieties were numerous; rose and cream were the colours that particularly arrested attention; and one variety was almost as large as the blossom of a rose. These beautiful flowers, it was easy to see, had won the admiration of some fair occupant of the Harem; and the care and attention of the gardener were stimulated to a healthful activity by the knowledge that the bastinado, or the galleys at Alexandria, would be the sure penalty of his neglect to gratify the lady's floral tastes.

There is a small sheet of ornamental water, in which the Egyptian lotus might expand itself pictorially, to the gratification of visitors: but it is a striking illustration of

the miserably narrow mind of the functionary in charge of the public Gardens of Alexandria. He has actually converted it, from its original ornamental purpose, into a place for raising and fatting ducks and geese, which are purchased from the stewards of ships in the port; polluting the water which otherwise would be limpid and pretty with the foliage of the lotus, which you see nipped off just as it is coming to flower. These Gardens were planned by the great Abbas Pasha, a warm friend to Europeans; in fine, for an Oriental despot, I may venture to say, a great and generous man; the intelligent promoter of enterprise, and the far-seeing patron of trade, who did not forget to attend to the interests of his own subjects. The fellah in his village to this day may be heard to exclaim "Happy were we when Abbas Pasha was our ruler!" He sternly repressed the Greek domination and interference; and, kind to the English, he was always concessional to the French. I can only regret that his character has not been dwelt upon by some one better able to do it justice than I can in this passing notice of him.

Mr. Drake, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, and I proposing to take donkey-exercise, two magnificent animals were brought to our hotel, rejoicing in the exalted titles of "His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales," and the "Marquis of Bute." The donkey boys are the wits of Egypt,—chartered libertines to whom alone is accorded the privilege of freely expressing their thoughts and of indulging in satiric comment on men and things; and accordingly great is their liveliness.

When the animal on which I was seated did not keep up with my companion, my boy would sing out gleefully: "You no good, Marquis of Bute! you big fool! Prince of Wales donkey very good!" As we passed other travellers mounted on donkeys, we found that every one of them derived its name from the English Peerage. One venerable animal I once had brought to me to ride was called "Lord Napier;" and we ascertained that the name of the winner of the Derby is regularly awaited every year, and allotted to a special donkey candidate for the distinction of such nomination;—not a bad mode of diffusing and perpetuating the glorious traditions of the English Turf.

These donkey-boys will conduct you to any place you want; they are without exception the best dragomen in Egypt, with the advantage of being many a hundred per cent. cheaper than the regular members of that class. They are very observant, too; and I cannot help accounting for the fact by the circumstance that they are continually coming into contact with lively, good-natured youngsters of our own nation, on their way out to India and elsewhere, who make it their business to have a good deal of cheerfulness and fun on their hands, during their short stay in Alexandria. Donkeys, be it remembered, are the cabs of Alexandria, and the experience of character likely to be gained by these boys in a twelvemonth is not inconsiderable. Their benevolence is an additional recommendation. I cannot forget one instance of my donkey-boy's concern for my happiness. I was seated in the balcony of Abbott's hotel, engaged in

serious conversation with a friend, when it occurred to my donkey-boy that I was oppressed with gloominess; which he forthwith sought to disperse by introducing some wonderful jugglers, who performed several feats, both dexterous and amusing; not the least singular of which was the production of any number of guinea-pigs out of their mouths.

Building progresses rapidly in Alexandria, and some very nice houses were in course of erection during my stay. Arab labour is obtained cheap by every nation except the English, who have to pay through the nose for everything; and I was greatly amused to find that the Arabs knew how matters stood in the way of high prices at home; to which they have apparently resolved to accommodate their own charges.

The Police force of Alexandria consists chiefly of Italians, who get about £8 a month,—by no means a good order of men. Very few of these low Italians are reliable; in my opinion, they are a far worse class of men than the Greeks; in regard to whom I will interpose the observation that a good Greek is a very good fellow.

To shew how travellers are systematically fleeced by the dragomen, let me here record a small experience of my own, which fortunately did not go to the full length. Yielding to the languor which creeps over one in places like Alexandria, and to the persuasive tongue of one of these harpies, hanging about the hotel, who said he could get my ticket for Jaffa (from the Russian Steamboat Office) at a great deal less than I could manage it myself, I commissioned him to go and ascertain its exact

cost. After an interval, he returned with the intimation that it was five pounds. Luckily I did not entrust the execution of the commission to him: I said "All right; I am in no hurry for it." But, when I applied at the office on the next day, I found that the ticket cost *two* pounds. This is only one of numerous cases within the range of my knowledge, in which the dragomen have more than cent-per-centified their charges. The traveller must never relax the severity of his vigilance against them.

Before leaving for Jaffa, I bade farewell to two of the best young Englishmen it has ever fallen to my lot to meet; and I would here record my grateful sense of their charming amiability, and of the kind consideration they evinced for me during our ship voyage together, when, in a hurricane we encountered, the water poured into my cabin and deluged everything I had. My parting from them was painful. I saw them off by train for Cairo; and with heavy heart I left Alexandria on my travel Jaffa-wards.

CHAPTER II.

PORT SAID.

THE little Russian steamer on which I now found myself was the cleanest boat I ever set foot on. The Captain was Russian, as were also the steward and the under-steward, with a Greek crew; and the civility of all and sundry was all that could have been desired, though it was somewhat impeded by the awkward circumstance that none of them (save the Captain) could speak a word of English. By way of amends for this drawback, however, we enjoyed the privilege of the society of a Missionary, an Arab who professed to have been converted to Christianity, and whose career illustrates the old text that godliness is gain. There are people who strive earnestly to make the best of both worlds. This man certainly applied himself with exemplary zeal to making his sublunary lot as comfortable as he could possibly

render it. He had been married twice, and both the ladies whom he had matrimonially honoured were English. His first wife was a woman of considerable fortune,—a perfect fanatic, who had to pay a terrible penalty for her views, and on whose death he succeeded to her wealth. Providing for his domestic comfort, he married again; and this poor woman was a victim to Asiatic law in respect of social rites, the observance of which he, although converted to Christianity, rigorously exacted. He had been to England, and, by taking a tour through districts of a serious turn of mind (especially Scotch towns) had succeeded in raising the wind to the respectable tune of £2000; and, when I add that he enjoys an annual income of £900 duly remitted to him in quarterly instalments by zealous friends in England, his lot will be pronounced to be alarmingly un-Apostolical. We also had on board a Lady Missionary, between whom and the aforesaid Gospel-diffuser there was little love lost, for they soon came to loggerheads. Awaking to the unseemliness of the exhibition, however, they suspended hostilities, and bombarded me with applications for subscriptions to "the good cause." These I respectfully but firmly resisted; and, when they discovered that my No was not to be translated into Yes, it was not long before they provided themselves with some pretext for communicating to me the delightful intelligence that I was "not a gentleman." These people, I have always observed, reserve this thunderbolt of social annihilation for those who refuse to comply with their impudent demands: but, while there is hope of a haul, you are

the pink of perfection. When Porson was told of Dr. Parr's praise of him as being a giant in literature, the mighty Grecian expressed doubt as to his critic's ability to take the measure of a giant. So, I meekly informed these exemplary bipeds that they unfortunately had had no social opportunities for knowing what either ladies or gentlemen were like, and that they were not sufficiently educated to appreciate the distinctions of class; and I further explained that, in the event of their securing admission to the presence of such personages, a cold bath every morning would not be held undesirable,—cleanliness being closely associated with godliness.

Our diet on board really was very good, though the Missionary (evidently a man not easy to be satisfied) grumbled all the way about it. At seven in the morning a cup of splendid Oriental coffee, with a rusk, was brought into my cabin, and the bath-room announced to be open. There was a luxury in the mention of the bath, which I soon realised to the full of enjoyment. As I paced the deck afterwards, smoking a narghil, I could command a view of the Greek and Russian pilgrims, who swarmed with vermin, congregated in groups around their priests, who were offering up prayers, and under whose guidance they were being conducted to the Holy Land.

Many of these poor creatures were suffering from ophthalmia, of which they devoutly believed the cure would be instantaneous and complete when they should wash their eyes in the water of the Jordan; and they treated my admonition to use regularly any water they could get

for their relief, with the disdain of incredulity. Lassitude, diet, opium-smoking and chewing, all seemed to combine to render them utterly indifferent to the ills they bear and the privations they undergo; and happy perhaps it is that it is so, for, to reach Jerusalem, the Russian pilgrim will go through the most acute difficulties.

The Mediterranean was as blue as the sky above us, with not a ripple on its surface; and the motion of our bright little steamer was hardly perceptible,—to which fortunate circumstance I was indebted for my escape from the unsavoury spectacle of the united sea-sickness of all these highly bilious people. After prayers, Arab fashion, all kinds of boxes were unpacked, and things produced for me to buy, My ready answer to these applications always was "*Mafeęsh,*" signifying "I have nothing." This seemed to settle them, the attainment by a European of a word or two of Arabic being reckoned highly satisfactory.

At breakfast the first course was a dish of Bologna sausage, sliced, with excellent Hungarian wine (dispensed in tumblers), which makes you feel, in Arab phrase, "nice tipsy," indeed warming one up and rendering him quite jolly. Then followed succulent ham, capital curries, and a peculiar Russian brawn, well suited to the climate. I dwell upon these delicacies with extreme satisfaction, as having been superior to the much vaunted table of the P. and O. Company; who, by the way, are not so nice as people are apt to imagine.

Our dinner consisted of soup, chickens, prime turkey, and good leg of mutton of a fine fat Syrian sheep; an

excellent repast, washed down with splendid English bottled ale and the exhilarating Hungarian wine. Dissatisfied as he was with all these gastronomic appliances, the Missionary yet devoted himself with rare assiduity to his fare, and paid the penalty of gluttony in sundry fits of indigestion, when it was frightful to hear him. During one of these his poor wife, I believe, came in for a vigorous slap or two on the face, if indeed she did not get some heavier chastisement; which it was by no means pleasant to be told of. But these missionaries, as a rule, fancy themselves Lord-Archbishops of Canterbury, and quite the upper crust of all their fellow travellers; and our ravenous reverend, like most wilful people in the world, was allowed to go on with his eccentricities and cruelties unchecked.

The light-house of PORT SAID, at the entrance to the great Canal, is a very fine one, built, like all those hereabouts, on the French model. Opinions will, of course, vary: but I hope I shall not provoke the wrath of eminent mariners when I say that they appear to be thoroughly efficient. They are under the superintendence of Maurice Bey, Controller of Egyptian Light-houses to His Highness the Viceroy, and a Captain in Her Majesty's Navy;—an admirable fellow to whom I may have occasion to refer hereafter.

On emerging to our view, Port Said looked like a poor, quickly-got-up, French Canadian place; and this first impression I subsequently found to be confirmed by the reality. I was greatly pleased, however, with the Square, called after M. de Lesseps; in the centre of which is a

tastefully laid out garden, with an ample tank of water, surmounting which is a Swiss-shaped orchestra in which the band plays thrice a week. The music is of a very mixed character, horrible Turkish strains alternating with exquisite French airs and Classical Operatic melodies. The only English piece I heard played was "The Last Rose of Summer." The Arabs pay little attention to Music; in fact, they regard it (certainly as volumed by Western art) with the same feelings of alarm with which they look upon bell-ringing, though they have their own one-stringed instruments. Bell-ringing with them is opposed to decency and order; and they have a superstitious fear lest the spirits of the dead should be disturbed by the tintinnabular clangour. I was not a little amazed, therefore, to see that men who might be said to have been just caught from the wild desert could be found equal to the execution of airs from "Faust."

There is one very good edifice in the Square, the internal arrangements of which, comprising a superb bath-room with all European appliances, are the most perfect in Port Said. It is the residence of Mr. Royal and Mr. Webster, Directors of the Port Said Coal Company, two hearty Englishmen, whose kindness to me will be commemorated further on.

It may seem a small matter to record, but I have a vivid recollection of the pleasure I derived from a draught of new milk which I got from a Frenchman who was the proprietor of two French cows,—the only two European animals I saw during my sojourn in the East. My thirst on the occasion combined with the satisfaction of knowing

that the milk was pure (for the old Frenchman milked the cow before me) to render that refreshment memorable. The cows also, let me add, suffered from ophthalmia.

Port Said, be it noted, by virtue of its being the French settlement in Egypt, is markedly French in its characteristics. It is irradiated with the cheerfulness of *la belle France;* and at the cafés, to which all grades resort, you may see rascals of every variety, Communists, Napoleonists, and all the other ists. It is a singular social medley, an omnium-gatherum of a very variegated pattern in which every colour is represented: but the confines of the Desert impose a certain degree of political sobriety on these too inflammable spirits, who find here that it does not pay to quarrel about nothing, and who, therefore, wisely attend just to earning their own honest livelihood. Would that more could be induced to follow their example! Unhappy France could well spare a few shiploads of these dangerously ardent "patriots," who apparently will not recognise the advantage of their deportation for their country's good.

CHAPTER III.

JAFFA.

Our landing at Port Said broke the monotony of our voyage to Jaffa, for which we now pursued our course. The time so occupied was about forty hours, during which we coasted a good deal. I was impressed by a remark made by our (Russian) Captain in the course of a miscellaneous conversation, that people who go to the Holy Land are seldom very holy after accomplishing their journey. This he explained by saying that one such trip did away with all the grandeur one was wont to associate with the Holy Land, and that religious fervour soon subsided after witnessing the dirt and misery accumulated there;—a striking illustration of the poet's observation that it is distance which lends enchantment to the view. Stage properties in the garish light of day are seldom

inviting; or, to speak more positively, they are very disappointing.

We anchored off JAFFA, about three-quarters of a mile from the land; and we had hardly done so, or were barely conscious of the operation, when the whole ship was invaded by Arabs in the most tumultuous manner, one in eagerness of competition knocking the other down. The contest was for the transport of our luggage, and I am sure it lasted over half an hour. I said to the Captain "How long will this fun go on?" "Oh!" answered he, "they will fight it out all round till the excitement is over, and then they will calmly await your orders." In the meantime he suggested that we should have a cup of coffee together. Their fervour subsided even as he told me it would evaporate; and, by the time we had leisurely finished our coffee, all these scoundrels had become perfectly calm, and awaited the future in an unexceptionably business frame of mind. Up started now a dragoman, who put into my hands about twenty several letters of recommendation from as many English gentlemen whom he had had the distinguished honour (to use his own language) to conduct through the Holy City and other parts of the Holy Land. We are all pretty well agreed as to the worth of written testimonials of the sort: but it is easy to see that these flattering acknowledgments of services rendered are made by those who, having got into the clutches of exceptionable dragomen (and their name is Legion), release themselves from the hateful incubi by the expedient of dismissing them with a flourish

of trumpets. The morality of the proceeding is not beyond impeachment; and inexperienced travellers, of whom there is annually a very large number, become victims to their blind confidence in these worthless documents. This fellow glibly enumerated the names of every person of distinction who had recently travelled in the East, and I soon satisfied myself, from the lofty tone of this high-minded gent, that an *aide-de-camp* of his stamp was quite beyond my humble measure. He was arrayed in coat and knickerbockers which once had clothed the august frame of the Marquis of Bute; to whom I suppose also belonged the fashionable laced Regent Street shoes in which his crural extremities were enveloped. His stout Arab legs, let me do him the justice to record, won the warm admiration of an American lady, who at Jerusalem expatiated on his heroic proportions;—judging of Hercules by his foot, she admired him "so thoroughly for his whole physique."

I put myself for the nonce under his direction, and was taken ashore in a boat, for which I had to pay half-a-crown; when I was conducted to a hotel kept by a very sharp German, who had been made a kind of Consul to the American Government under Consul-General Hay of Beyrout. This dragoman, who was perhaps one of the most outrageous of existing scamps,—one of those men who would try to "do" you in every variety of way, but withal of the civillest possible type,—now applied himself to business, asking if I proposed to go on with horse to Jerusalem. "How much you pay for one horse?" "Six shillings," said I. "Two pounds," was the demand. I

resolutely stuck to six shillings: and the bargain ultimately was struck for eight. Let me note that useful horses are to be had here in great numbers, and the traveller need never fear for an adequate supply. I had arranged for my supper and bed for the night for twelve shillings: but, through the dragoman's machinations doubtless, in the morning a demand of thirty shillings was made on me, which I inflexibly refused to comply with. This is the common mode of extortion; and most people, to avoid the unpleasantness of contesting these outrageous claims, quietly submit to them, and thereby foster the system.

I visited the Orange Groves, which I think I can safely say are the largest in the world; covering, it is told, an extent of six miles. The oranges were the largest I ever saw, and the Tangerines were in great perfection. A Syrian girls' school is in operation here; and I was shewn the residence of Simon the Tanner: but I am more concerned to record the fact that that excellent lady, Mrs. Hay, the mother of the American Consul-General, resides here. Altogether, nothing very interesting arrested my attention: but the perfume of the Orange Groves was delightfully refreshing after the terrible Asiatic stinks of Alexandria and the noisomeness of the pilgrims on board the steamer.

At nine in the morning our party mounted their horses, and made a start,—which was a great thing to be able to do, leaving all our extortioners behind. I was on a superb chestnut Arab mare, which went along, for a considerable distance, like the wind. All horses bought of

the Bedouins start at full speed at once, being trained to the habit. Riding out of the Orange Groves, we got to a curious old watering-place, where the mules were kicking and biting one another to get first to the water. This advised us that no water was to be had for a good way, and we deemed it prudent to dismount and water our steeds. Upon remounting we made up our minds not to pull rein until we arrived at what is called the Half-way House, kept by a Dutchman. On the road we were much struck with the cultivation of wheat, of which there were some really good fields, causing me to exclaim that European hands must have been at work here to produce these results. We learned that a large colony of Americans settled in this region, a few years before, and had devoted themselves to the cultivation of the land; but their director, or president, had misappropriated the money of the community and decamped, leaving the honest sons of labour perfectly destitute of means, I believe almost starving. The tidings of their distress reaching the ears of a benevolent countryman, who was travelling in Syria at the time, he liberally paid the cost of the passages of the whole settlement back to America, out of his own private pocket. All departed but one; and that solitary survivor of the ill-fated society lives at Jaffa, and is a dragoman of exemplary behaviour, who has the additional virtue of being an intelligent anecdotist. The last time I saw him, he was acting as dragoman to Mr. and Mrs. How.

The Valley of Sharon was carpeted with one continuous magnificent blaze of red anemones. Syrians will tell you

that they are the roses of Sharon. Such a mass of blossom I never before set eyes on; and they may be seen growing midst the wheat, like our English poppies. The skylark abounds here, but it is never known to sing. Quail also are plentiful. The cattle, of which the prevailing colour is black or fawn, though of small size, are very enduring, being kept at the plough all day. They work the milking cows as well as the oxen,—and poor milkers they are: in fact, the Syrian goat will yield a quart, at a milking, to the pint of the Syrian cow. But the milk in this region is very rich.

About half-past twelve we arrived at the Dutchman's Half-way House, a clean, tidy caravansary, before which lay resting twenty camels laden with baggage, under the guard of two Arab khavasses, who would be held responsible in the event of any loss. As we approached the door, we witnessed the immediate decapitation of three chickens, which were then thrust into boiling water and stripped of their feathers. In about twenty minutes, while we refreshed ourselves with brandy and water, there were signs of food being on the way; and we did not fail to do justice to it, when set before us, the evident cleanliness of the place with its whitewashed walls stimulating the appetite. Mounting our horses after a short spell, we continued our ride, during which we were pursued, for at least one hour, by two Arab youths who shouted *Baksheesh!* incessantly. Of course we did not regard the application so pertinaciously made: but their resolution was evinced by the fact that they kept pace with our horses. In truth, these Arabs find no difficulty

in keeping up with any European horseman. When we got off to rest our steeds, the prospect was a charming one. Behind us was visible the lovely Mediterranean, whose blue baffles alike literary and pictorial delineation; and before us was Bal Wady, or the Gate of the Mountains.

This point may be said to be the entrance to the mountains. As we approached the house, two wild-looking Arab ostlers rushed out in their usual excited way on the advent of travellers, and pulled at our horses' reins as if they were most murderously inclined, calling upon us in Arabic to dismount; my directions in English being rewarded with the iteration of *Mushareef* (I don't understand). No sooner did we dismount than they set to shoving us up some most curious steps, which conducted to an upper courtyard with doors on either side; within which I caught sight of a batch of Russian pilgrims regaling themselves with boiled beans and olives off a filthy tablecloth. This was our first introduction to real Syrian fare, and it was so uninviting that we prudently resolved to postpone refreshments until we reached Jerusalem, which was about four hours off. Our nags, however, were supplied with barley, and tibbin, which is the cut straw of the barley.

Resuming our journey at two P.M., we soon came up with the spectacle of a couple of Syrian wolves enjoying the remains of a dead donkey. The ascent of the mountains was gradual; and most painful was the impression made on my mind by the stony desolation around, unrelieved, save at intervals, by a few olive

trees, which, it is well known, thrive all over Syria, growing in great splendour in respect both of size and quality of wood. The grounds owned by proprietors residing in various adjacent villages were enclosed by peculiar stone walls, which must have involved considerable labour in their erection. Our course was now straight for Jerusalem. We passed several fine herds, numbering from 300 to 400 each, of black goats; which are the only animals that can live in this part of Syria; and indeed I am puzzled to know how even they managed to live at all. Within an hour's ride of our destination, a man rushed out from the roadside with an offer to supply us with either coffee or cognac; upon our declining which baksheesh was demanded, with the addition of fearful compliments in Arabic bestowed on us for non-compliance. Putting spurs to our horses in anticipation of a tremendous thunder-storm which we saw coming up over the mountains, we shook our tormentor off; but we did not escape the storm, which burst in torrents of rain drenching us to the skin, while the claps of thunder reverberated grandly, this stony region reproducing and accentuating the crash of every successive peal. It was a startling scene, this contest of the elements. Nevertheless, we were glad to sight in the distance the last hill to be surmounted before gaining the top of the plain on which Jerusalem stands.

On ascending the plateau, we came in view of the Hospice for pilgrims erected by the Russian Government; in excavating for the foundations of which, discovery was made of an exquisitely carved granite pillar of the olden

time. It is a magnificent pile, certainly the finest European edifice in the East, excepting Missionary Mott's house in Beyrout. It contains every possible accommodation for the individual pilgrim, whose stay is limited, I think, to a fortnight; and it is maintained at the cost of the Russian Government. We made our entry into Jerusalem just as the sun was setting, and witnessed the closing of the Damascus gate. Thereat we knocked and kicked for a long time without succeeding in getting any response: but, when "*baksheesh!*" was named, it was opened with magical celerity; and we were allowed to pass through on payment of two shillings per head. Our forlorn, wet condition, I do believe, moved the compassion of the soldiers who guarded the portals; yet they did not omit to overhaul everything we had.

CHAPTER IV.

JERUSALEM.

Our first experience of Jerusalem was hardly satisfactory, by reason of the foul odours generated by the recent rains. In the street we were most politely accosted by a German Jew, or, as he professes to be, a Christian. My readers will easily understand, from this slight intimation, what he could do in the way of driving a bargain. He asked fifteen francs for bed and board *per diem:* but he readily consented to take eight; and accordingly we went to "The Mediterranean" hotel, several bed-rooms in which smelt horribly. This hotel, which is situated on Mount Zion, is not to be compared with "The Damascus" at the other end, in point of salubrity. One of its appurtenances was a pool, full of dead cats and dogs; which sufficiently explained the mephitic exhalations in the bed-rooms. After brushing

up a bit, I was rejoiced to hear the announcement of dinner, at which I had the good fortune to enjoy the company of Miss Whitehead, and Mr. and Mrs. How, the most refined Americans I ever chanced to meet. They had travelled all over Europe, and were full of various and instructive conversation, which added not a little to the pleasure of my stay here. After dinner, about fifty dragomen charged at me, bearing in their hands vast packets of testimonials from English lords and ladies; who, I could not help thinking, might have set up for life many a score of their obscure fellow-countrymen at home, had they only condescended to favour them with similar flourishing documents. Next rushed in a number of Arabs with Syrian lamps, which they gratified themselves by calling "antiques," but which it required no great penetration to see were made and baked in 1873 instead of 500 B.C. These rascals are so used to being snubbed for these rank forgeries that they take your explosions of indignation thereat quite as matter of course, and merely bow and retire. These were succeeded by an old widow who expatiated on the many virtues of Lord This and Lady That, who had bought of her cards of preserved flowers from Bethlehem and Nazareth. The nobles evidently were not destitute of taste. I observed, by the way, that you never hear a Syrian quote a plain Mr. or Mrs. To make any figure at all here, it was absolutely necessary to assume some titular decoration; so my friend, Dr. Chapman, invariably addressed me as "Colonel," which added considerably to my comfort: and perhaps it may be as well for me to

Vincent Brooks, Day & Son, Lith.

PILGRIMAGE IN JERUSALEM

make a clean breast of it at once by assuring the reader that this was not the first occasion in life, on which I found it salutary to take brevet-rank among barbarians. Nor were vendors who professed to dispose of old coins wanting to the throng that waited on us at the hotel. Altogether we spent a very pleasant evening in the inspection of gloriously new antiques; after which exhausting diversion I was glad to get to bed.

Rising early the next morning, I was supplied with a limited cup of coffee (everything, be it known, is meted out to you most miserably), and went forth on my first reconnoitre. I called upon Consul Moore, whom I found to be a highly agreeable man and—for a Levantine born—very affable to Englishmen; perhaps, in that way, the best of the Consuls in Syria, though I have been assured of the painstaking and kindness of Mr. Greene at Damascus. In my progress I observed that I was widely stared at, and soon I was met with the salutation "*Khabeya Hadji*" (great traveller!). As soon as this was sung up Christian Street, Arabs pressed around me with all kinds of ware. Presently I heard a great shouting, and, to my intense amusement, there was an Irishman (or a reputed one, for I don't believe he was a Milesian) crawling, barefooted, on his hands and knees through one of the dirtiest highways in the East; his wife walking before him, scattering shillings and sixpences among the delighted Arabs, who viewed the performance in a strictly practical light, merely remarking "Some mad Englishman," and astonished at my vulgarity in roaring with laughter at the outrageous exhibition. The lady

was really pretty, and I hardly like to say she was without shoes: but the very Arabs pointed to her feet, exclaiming "*Tayeb khatya!*" (How pretty!). I learned that this individual was executing this penance for some imaginary evil of which he was the author. Perhaps he really sought to get rid of the liver complaint. Anyhow he traversed a good distance—from the extreme end of Christian Street to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. I encountered him at dinner in the evening, when he favoured the company, much to their annoyance, with an elaborate lecture, full of dreams he had had in England, the visions in which he had come out to realise here. Men of this class are attracted to the Holy Land; and, if not sufficiently distracted for lunatic asylums, they may well be allowed to expend their singular enthusiasms out of the way of their friends.

If you commit yourself to the charge of a dragoman, he will map out a tour round about Jerusalem necessitating the devotion thereto of several days. He will give you the minutest details of memorable places and events, and is not unequal to the feat of indicating the exact spot where the Cock crew. Considering that he rates his charge at £2 a day, this historical and topographical particularity may be resolved into anxiety to serve the selfish interests of Number One.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is in the possession of the Greek and Latin Churches, a separate recess being granted to the Copts. It was with extreme difficulty that I was able to get a peep into the interior of the Greek chapel, which is gorgeous with profuse ornament, where

I saw a priest, in some act of devotion, holding in his hand a magnificent jewelled napkin, radiant with diamonds, emeralds and rubies. The Greek establishment is very wealthy, being enriched by the continuous streams of Russian pilgrims—men, women, and children—whose sole object in life appears to be to kiss the Sepulchre, after which they are content to return home. These you may see being conducted round the town by Greek priests, who take especial good care that they do not fall into the clutches of the mercenary dragomen, who are the most abandoned gamblers in the world. The show-money, it was a comfort to think, went to the support of some better cause than the gratification of the consuming passion for gambling of these men. The pilgrims frequently make gifts of their old family jewels, which they dedicate to the Holy Shrine.

From the Greeks we turned to the Latins. The priests certainly struck me as not being of a high order, anything like parallel to their brethren in the Protestant church. A priest came forward to meet us, and presented us with tapers; after which service he sat himself in a recess, where he began fumbling with a plate, previous deposits in which were carefully concealed by a napkin. Through a crevice we were shown a bit of the Rock of Calvary, concealed by the buildings in which it is embedded. It was all so dark, and the subdued light shed by the burning candles combined with the fumes of incense to give such dim relief to the religious gloom, that it induced a feeling of melancholy. My American

companion, however, was far from being similarly affected, for he besought me to "Come out of it; pray don't look at all this Barnum." He not only had no sentiment himself, but could not tolerate indulgence in it by others. Undeterred by his reproaches, I continued taking a turn or two, taper in hand, and was rewarded for my industry by seeing a most beautiful painting of Our Saviour, which I have no hesitation in saying has the loveliest expression of face I ever saw in any representation of Him. From its retired position I fear it escapes the observation of travellers generally. Here was a figure of the Virgin, coated with jewels; of which the display was so tempting that I wondered the Turkish guards (who ever and anon pestered us for baksheesh) did not, with their innate love of jewellery, quietly remove the glass and walk off with the whole lot. It would be instructive could we learn what these Turks think of the frequent disputes that arise between the Greek and Latin Christians,—and all in the name of the Lord,—and which they, by a finely ironical arrangement of things, are empowered to stop. On gala days two hundred of them are on duty, with arms piled outside ready for use, as in a barrack-yard. On a recent occasion, when a rupture took place and Greeks and Latins illustrated the gospel of peace and good-will in their strange (Christian!) fashion, the Turkish soldiers, laughing at the spectacle, thrashed the combatants all round with great impartiality until the controversy was settled. Their task of keeping order between the rival sects is by no means a light one; and absolute neutrality

can be secured only by this rough-and-ready mode of administering justice.

I next visited the yard of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where most beautiful mother-of-pearl ornaments, engraved by Arab workmen (who are very imitative), are on sale. And I did not forget to inspect Shapeira's famous collection, numbering 1000 pieces, of clay "antiques," not the least remarkable part of which was devoted to representation of the Abomination of Moab. This collection has since been sold, I learn, to the Crown Prince of Prussia as genuine examples of Moabite pottery, for the sum of £2000. It consisted not only of vessels and fragments of the same, but also of figures of men, women, and the lower animals, some of which had their backs covered with inscriptions.* I have never yet seen, or heard of, anything but fragments of ancient Moabite pottery; and I therefore can only express my admiration of the singular good fortune which had evidently attended the explorations of the proprietor of this vast collection. By way of promoting the taste for Moabite art, I take this opportunity to inform my readers that a second collection, not inferior to the last in respect of number and decency, awaits the munificent patronage of people of exalted rank. I was indeed much amused at Shapeira's capacity for supplying all classes of travellers with "antiques;"—Englishmen in pursuit of scientific

* I was most anxious to secure copies of these inscriptions for the use of that learned Hebrew scholar, Rev. Dunbar Heath, of Esher: but they were so mystified that he has been unable to make anything of them.

objects, as well as those who gratify the ordinary rage for travel; with flowers for romantic ladies, and prayer-books for pious Americans.

One of his domestic arrangements was not ill calculated to inflame the imagination of intending purchasers of these valuable "finds." The so-called Princess of Moab was reported to be staying with him; and Bedouin sheikhs might be observed about his place, with their grand Arab steeds. Startling information was always being had of the discovery of some most precious relic which was about to be brought in by an Arab sheikh. *Credat Judæus*! My scepticism may be most unreasonable; but I gravely incline to suspect that a brisk trade is carried on in Damascus in the way of manufacturing and baking "antique" pottery. Now and then curious coins and old bronzes are, I know, picked up: but it stands to reason that such an enormous number of antiques cannot possibly exist. Why, if due encouragement were offered, enough would be forthcoming to fill a repository as capacious as the recently destroyed Pantechnicon.

I was fortunate in being favoured with a letter of introduction to Dr. Chapman here, who was very kind to me during the whole of my sojourn in Jerusalem. He has the reputation in London of being the first scientific man in Syria.

Under Cook's guidance there arrived, during my stay, a party of Mormons, eager to look upon the valley of the Jordan: but they did not receive much consideration; in fact, great surprise was manifested at Cook's introduc-

tion of Mormons into this region.* By the way, this system of touring is a terrible cut down to the dragomen, whom it deprives of their hurtful monopoly. What the tourists can expect to see within the time allotted for "doing" a place, however, I cannot make out.

The Bishop of Jerusalem being a German, his selections of clergy are mostly German. He has a son-in-law at Nazareth of the same nationality, who struck me as being about the most cantankerous man I ever met. The presentation to the See of Jerusalem is made alternately by England and Germany; yet they betray exceeding jealousy of us, though they are not slow to take our contributions to their support. There is a nice little church here, at every service in which travellers are called upon to subscribe towards the maintenance of "the good cause."

The industry of Jerusalem seems to be confined to one line of manufacture—ornamental work in olive-wood, which is very pretty indeed; and I witnessed the arrival of only one vegetable—brocoli, the largest ever seen by me anywhere. The Arab will make a meal of this vegetable without anything else to eke it out. The weather was very cold, and firing difficult to get. Small bundles of wood are brought in by the Arabs at the charge of two francs each. The hotels, therefore, are

* The khimekar at Damascus protested against their presence and they themselves seemed to think there was some danger in remaining in a country where their nationality was not recognised, for they thus became amenable to the laws of Turkey, and liable, at the will of Bey or other official, to be bastinadoed.

very uncomfortable. In the evening I occasionally saw large flocks of small Syrian owls on the walls of Jerusalem. I must not forget to add that the water supplied for drinking here was shocking, and most apt to produce diarrhœa.

A short trip to the Jordan was made in the society of some most remarkable Americans, whom a Boston gentleman (who was of the party) characterised as "perfect blowers;"—which they certainly were. They were most loquacious, with judgments on men and things ready for delivery at a moment's notice, and professed to be great linguists; by virtue of which accomplishment they affected to look down upon me as quite a bore, for speaking only English, though they afterwards found me very useful in having language enough to persuade a lady to abandon her idea of baptism for the third time in her life.

In the East the start is the difficult part of the journey. Good horses were provided for us, and all that we could expect was in our favour; yet we lost an hour through the absurd fussiness of the (American) ladies of our party, who protested (among other things) that their saddles were either too tight or too loose. After a prolonged wrangle among them, we reached Jericho, where we stopped for the night, and where we were assailed by three Bedouin sheikhs who rode about us frantically demanding baksheesh. They know full well that they are sure to obtain this black-mail where women are concerned, if only for the sake of peace and quietness; and, in this case, their apparition powerfully affected the

nerves of the men who so gallantly escorted the ladies. Several of them were rich, obese bacon-merchants from New York, whose shoppy talk did not contribute to make our association very enjoyable.

The accommodation at Jericho was very bad: but American travellers, being locomotives, never complain. On getting to the Jordan, we saw lots of pilgrims who, on their first view of the river, dashed in like so many cattle stung by gadflies; one or two of them, indeed, narrowly escaped drowning. And here occurred the incident to which I have alluded above, when I was found to be of some use to my companions.

An American lady, enjoying an income of many thousand dollars a year and therefore equal to such a luxurious privilege as triple immersion in the Jordan, was impressed by her spiritual adviser in New York with the sublime virtue of baptism in the river for the third time. Attended by the divine, whose person did not betray the usual results of orthodox ecclesiastical fare on the system, she started to execute the cherished project. Between Alexandria and Jaffa they seem to have got into hot controversy on various religious topics; and, by the time they arrived at Jerusalem, an open rupture had taken place. Still the lady was not left destitute of the reverend "help" she required, for she soon was introduced to the notice of an English clergyman here, who, not unob servant of the pyramids of diamonds on her fingers, placed his services at her disposal, and, accompanying us for the purpose, with due solemnity christened her Mary in the Jordan. Such was her state of mental bliss after

the ceremony that she could not be induced to quit the seat on the bank of the river, on which she had deposited herself in a transport of religious enthusiasm. Nothing apparently could persuade her to leave the place. There she sat, deaf to the entreaties of her friends. As time wore on, our anxiety to get back to Jericho before nightfall was increased, and a council of war was held, when they did me the honour to consult me. I at once engaged to move her for four shillings, which they eagerly professed their willingness to increase to twenty, if I so desired. I had just seen in the distance a troop of Bedouin horsemen, whom I, unobserved by the enthusiast, hired to come down to our party, brandishing their spears in the approved theatrical fashion, and to threaten the recalcitrant lady that, as they were rather short of women, they would carry her off, if she any longer refused to mount her horse. This she did with great alacrity. The prospect of forming part of a Bedouin household soon brought her to her senses; and I received the thanks of her friends for my presence of mind in utilising the Bedouin horsemen as I did. I was afterwards told that she bestowed handsome baksheesh on the baptising clergyman, besides stripping one of her heavily laden fingers of its costly jewels.

Returning to Jerusalem by way of Jericho (when I was thoroughly fatigued by the Turkish saddle I rode in), I took up my quarters again at the "Mediterranean Hotel," where I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. John Andrews, an eminently agreeable and companionable gentleman, an old Norwegian traveller, well known as an ardent

disciple of Izaak Walton. In his pleasant and instructive company, I naturalised the region about Jerusalem. We found some fine land-shells and a few varieties of the butterfly. The common European peacock butterfly reigns here, but, owing to the climate, of a much brighter colour. We saw two or three gazelles; which are rarely visible, and are very shy of observation from the sharp look-out for them kept by the Turkish soldiers.

In execution of my resolution to visit BETHLEHEM and Solomon's Pool, I started next morning at 9. After a most enjoyable ride of three hours and a half, during which were often had views of the Dead Sea backed by the mountains of Moab,—highly panoramic in effect,—our approach to Bethlehem was signalised by the appearance of Syrian women wearing coin head-dresses (the first I had as yet seen worn in the country), who invited purchase of rosaries composed of berries and pearls. It was no easy matter to make way through the crowd of little boys, who had evidently been despatched thither from Jerusalem to secure what baksheesh they could from travellers; and, after surmounting that difficulty, we soon arrived at the Convent, the general untidiness of which may be guessed from the fact of a large herd of pigs, the common property of the Greek and Latin priests, being maintained in front of it. [This was my first sight of pigs in Syria.] After long knocking at the door of the Convent, we were received by a Latin priest, who intimated that we had just missed seeing a Russian prince, who had lodged there for the night. Shown into a large,

long hall adorned with three portraits,—the Emperor and the Empress of Austria, with the Pope in the middle,—we were asked to partake of refreshment; whereupon was set before us the usual Italian food consisting of macaroni and chicken. The priest then proceeded to conduct us to the Birthplace of Our Saviour. We went through various corridors, on either side of which were some wonderful pictures, which (the priest informed us) had forcibly struck Holman Hunt, and which he had highly praised; and we were shewn the exact spot where stood the Manger. A most thrilling feeling of awe comes over one in view of the spot associated with so stupendous a memory. The sense of something utterly extraordinary subdues the soul to supreme humility.

Thence we went to inspect the establishments, four in number, for the manufacture of pearl ornaments by Syrian workmen; and well may Captain Richard Burton say that these people are the most highly gifted in the world. Many of the natives of Bethlehem are handsome, the men equally with the women; and the remark will be better understood when I add that there are only two classes in Syria—without any intermediate grade—the very ugly and the very handsome.

Mounting our horses for SOLOMON'S POOL, we made for the house of one who, having put himself under English protection, assumed to himself the title of Englishman. He is the proprietor of large gardens, which produce excellent fruit for the consumption of Jerusalem; and great credit is due to him for his energy in conducting

water from Solomon's Pool to irrigate his grounds. He spoke of Holman Hunt in familiar terms.

Solomon's Pool is situated in a very rocky country, and highly interesting to view;—a huge water-tank, amply supplied with water and in good preservation. Hence we made a circuit, which yielded a very pleasant ride, for the purpose of paying a visit to the Austrian Consul, who speaks English admirably. We were kindly received by this gentleman, who lives the life of a hermit, surrounded by twenty dogs, perfect mongrels (true types of Eastern canine life), who had sought sanctuary with him from Jerusalem. His whole time is devoted to the care of the animal world, protection of the interests of Austrian subjects requiring but a fraction of his attention; for Austrians here are treated with the profoundest respect. After partaking of coffee with this benevolent gentleman, we took our leave, and got back to Jerusalem in time for dinner; and after dinner we made a visit to the Greek Hospital, on which I would exhaust criticism by observing that it is perfection itself.

CHAPTER V.

GAZA.—KHAN YUNUS.—WADY ARISH.—TAFLUGAY.—BEIT JEBRIN.—HEBRON.—JEBEL USDUM.

And now I began to think it was time for me to set out on more extensive travel; and, while revolving my plan of operations, I had the good fortune of being introduced by the English Consul, Mr. Moore, to Mr. W. D. Pritchett, who agreed to travel with me through the land of Moab. After sundry conferences on the subject, at the Prussian Hospice of the Order of the Knights of St. John, we decided to start without loss of time, directing our course to Gaza and so on to Wady Arish, which is the toll-taking entrance to Egypt. Accordingly we left Jerusalem at 10 A.M. on the 27th February, 1873.

Our good friends whom we left behind us at Jerusalem expressed considerable anxiety as to our undertaking so perilous a journey, and they recalled the fate of one or

two adventurers like ourselves (whose names have not come up), who set out similarly and never returned. We were not to be stayed, however; and we had resolved to rely strictly on our own resources. Thus, when we effected a start, we were altogether alone; without either arms or servants; our only guide being a map and a pocket compass; and a pound of tea representing the extent of our provisions. Nothing indeed could be simpler than our equipment, the saddle bags containing only a change of clothes, together with a small supply of medical comforts; and the total amount of cash with which we proposed to solve the difficulties of our way was about £20 in Turkish coin.

After a five hours' ride on that stony desolation, which extends over nearly eighteen miles of country offering little comfort for either mind or feet, we arrived at Bal Wady, the Gate of the Valley; when we were saluted from the housetop by the Jew landlord, who said he had a spacious saloon for our accommodation, wherein we should find plenty of food and no fleas:—in both which respects our confidence was grossly abused; and his capacity for fleecing the traveller may be estimated from the fact that, while he held us in conversation with all sorts of atrocious stuff, he coolly sent an Arab round to rob our horses of their barley, which he would readily sell to Russian pilgrims, for their mules, on their return journey to Jaffa *en route* to Russia. A damp bed, enlivened by numerous fleas, gave me no rest; and, when I arose in the morning, my whole body testified to the activity of the fleas: I looked as if I had the small-pox.

On my remonstrating with him, and inquiring why he did not keep a better hotel, which assuredly would be found more profitable, he piously replied: "God has given the day, and He will give the food." He asked me if I knew Sir Joseph Montefiore, and on my answering that, although I had not that pleasure, his fame was not unknown to me, he pronounced Sir Joseph to be "very good;" and he was honest enough, though it may be unwittingly, to impart to me his test of moral worth in the supplementary statement — "he gave me money;" which elicited from me the natural observation that Sir Joseph was rather a useful sort of fellow to know. The food which he supplied us with was a curiously mixed diet, consisting as it did of small Syrian eggs, sour milk, and poor olives. The olives luckily inflamed our appetite for the sorry fare set before us.

At sunrise the next morning we started for a ride of fifty-five miles to Gaza. On leaving the inn in a S. W. direction, we took road to Castenne, first passing through the Valley of Sharon. Every hour the land, as we advanced, became more fertile, and I was charmed with the plains of corn. The sheep, too, abounded around us, in excellent condition and with fair fleece, though the wool was not of close texture, being rather long. Good crops of wheat also abounded. What renders this most remarkable is the fact that they never manure the corn land; tobacco being the only production to which they apply manure. The whole road to Castenne was a hard ride of six hours, the valley being occupied, without intermission, with long stretches of wheat and barley; and we just

caught sight of a Syrian bear, who beat a hasty retreat. Arriving at Castenne at midday, we betook ourselves at once to the venerable Arab sheikh of the place, of whom we invited the favour of "lebbin," the sour milk which is found to be so supporting in this climate. He was far from civil; indeed, he looked as sour as the milk he dispensed, and it was easy to see that he desired to get rid of us without any delay. This small settlement was of Arab construction, the houses being square-built after the manner of boxes, and consisting simply of one room, with the bare earth for floor, and the outer court for the reception of donkeys, goats and fowls. The Arab, of course, never thinks of going out of doors except on donkey's back; and in these rural villages there is no thought of using either saddle or bridle, a stick serving for all gubernatorial purposes. The whole place was marked by evident signs of dirt and discomfort. For example, the spring which supplies water for domestic drinking is used for purposes of washing by the whole village, and the cattle also quench their thirst therein. The washing I allude to does not apply to the faces of the inhabitants: but I will not be ungenerous enough to deny that I saw several young men enjoying the luxury of cooling their feet in the stream. Ophthalmia seemed to be very prevalent; fifty out of every hundred, I may safely say, being afflicted either in one eye or in both. Dirt they evidently take a delight in, and they explain away their obvious reluctance to wash themselves by their superstitious horror of encountering the evil eye. The disease, it is easy to see, is carried by the flies from one to another's eyes.

In Egypt and Syria the malady reaches painful extremes, and for the first day or two is most distressing to the patients.

As we progressed, we continued to pass good crops of barley coming to ear, and the climate became sensibly warmer and warmer. At a village we went by we asked for a drink of milk and were refused. They desired us, however, to get off our horses, signifying their willingness to bake bread for us;—a proposition we declined with thanks. They were a poor, starved-looking people, dressed in the coarsest of clothing; and I was struck with the very limited quantity of food on which they subsisted. Rice is their staple food, with boiled wheat intermixed. Up to this time, be it remembered, we were without breakfast; and we looked with vision stimulated and sharpened by hunger for the prospect of Gaza. We had hoped to catch a glimpse of it before sundown; but alas! we could see nothing of it, and we became apprehensive of losing our way in the course of the next hour. Within a short time, however, we came upon some curious ruins introductory to Gaza; and as the sun went down three jackals began to raise their voices, imparting quite a saddening effect to the whole scene, and the owls, like flocks of rooks, to make up their minds for night-work; and I gradually realised the fearful loneliness of this singularly sorrowful country. At length we arrived at Gaza at 8½ P.M., and we threaded several queer streets before we reached the residence of Mr. Nimmo, an Englishman in the service of the Viceroy of Egypt, who has lived here for a period of eight years. His domestic

establishment is, far and away, the best in the place; and we received a hearty welcome from him: but the edifice is not a little curious in its construction. Our entry was effected through the stables, which conducted to the flower-garden, on either side of which were ranged the bed-rooms and the sitting-rooms, and the apartment reserved for guests to drink their coffee in. Right glad were we of the rest and of the refreshment provided for us.

There is a good Bazaar here, and a large trade is done in corn. I was lucky enough to discover an ancient Samaritan mural inscription, of which I did not fail to obtain a "squeeze." This may be seen suspended in the Museum of the Palestine Exploration Fund at the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly. Olives here, as elsewhere around, form an important item of commerce; and my ride through the olive groves, which took about an hour and a half, was a very pleasant one. Once a week the Bedouins bring in large numbers of sheep, poultry, and camels for sale; and I think I may venture to say this is the only town in Syria where they have perfect confidence in the public transaction of business. Our generous host, Mr. Nimmo, has established friendly relations with the Bedouin sheikhs, some of whom had excellent horses. I was anxious to obtain one of the curious Syrian head-dresses, and was not unwilling to give a fair price for one; but, when I found that its value was to be determined at so much per ounce, I abandoned all notion of the purchase.

An English school for Moslem boys has recently been opened in Gaza.

Our next stage was KHAN YUNUS, where we had to get a supply of barley for our horses, as it was represented to us by the Arabs that we could not depend upon getting it at our resting-place at night. The inhabitants were most audacious thieves, and did not hesitate to attack my companion, who found it no easy matter to force his way through them without injury to himself. Standing in my saddle, I charged at them with my stick, and effected his release. Thieves notoriously abound here, and we were glad to get off safe from the town. Just as we were quitting it, I observed a young rascal dexterously take my companion's handkerchief out of his pocket and speed away with it. I immediately set my horse at full gallop after him and compelled him to return it. This produced a great effect on the numerous spectators, who saw we were not afraid of them. After a ride of six hours, we came up to the hut of a native beside the Mussulman Burial-ground, and not far from the verge of the Desert. Our reception by the proprietor of this hut was not marked by an excess of civility, for on asking to be accommodated for the night he most unceremoniously said No; which he afterwards explained by saying it was the *locale* of his harem—a statement confirmed by the presence of six women whom I espied about the place. My companion appealed to him to water our horses, which he was readily moved to do; and he then taxed his hospitality to the extent of spreading a praying-carpet out for

us in his goat-yard; after which he was heard to caution the ladies against me, whose looks, I was mortified to learn, he did not like at all. Nor were they long in providing against a surprise, for they forthwith began barricading the door, talking audibly the while and peeping suspiciously through the crevices. He served us with rice and water, before withdrawing to the ladies for the night; and we were glad to lay our weary limbs down on the ample rug *sub Jove.*

When we awoke in the morning, our eyes were greeted with nothing but camel caravans, and vast sand mountains, which, increasing yearly, spread far into the interior of the land. The scene was relieved, a little further on, by small herbage and a few Bedouin tents.

Our next point was WADY ARISH, where they exact a toll of four shillings for every head of sheep, and of eight shillings for every head of cattle, customs due to the Viceroy. They were most particular here. We were not allowed to stay in the town, but a tent was pitched for us a mile without it, to which was given the name of the Cholera Morbus tent. This uninviting title, however, did not hinder us from doing justice to the good dinner provided for us—boiled chicken and goat's flesh. We were informed that we should not be allowed to continue here beyond the night, and a guard of soldiers was set over us. The fleas signalised themselves again on my body, but I was too tired to heed their activity.

Starting at sunrise, we soon fell in with a party of

Bedouin Arabs, who were most civil, giving us both lebbin and wild honey under the generous prompting of the Sitt,—the lady of the sheikh. They had some good horses with them, and the quality of their oxen and sheep was very fine. Our way now lay through tribe after tribe, from whom we got kindly entertainment, though the life to us was very hard. The country hereabouts evidenced signs of great fertility; indeed, all the plains of Philistia were fertile till within three hours of Hebron; and the barley was notably good. Every inch of soil around was under cultivation with either wheat or barley, for two whole days' journey.

At the village of TAFLUGAY we had a notion of the mode of life of the town Arabs, having to make our way to the guest chamber of a sheikh, who had kindly invited us to coffee and pipes, between two vast heaps of animal manure. (They suffer these to accumulate for years until they get into mountains.) Within were seated two Turkish soldiers besides our host, a very handsome young man of thirty, and very good-natured to boot. A deputation of old sheikhs of the village soon arrived to pay their respects. They were fine specimens of the Syrians, and it was easy to see that the fertility of the region in corn and cattle enabled all to live well. Two rich carpets were brought out for our use, and we enjoyed a meal of boiled mutton.

Pursuing our course onwards, we next reached BEIT JEBRIN, an old Crusading station, which possesses a venerable church, and an ancient well, around which are

ranged several beautiful marble pillars, and at which we saw the village maidens fill their water-jars. Beit Jebrin is one of the filthiest villages I encountered in the East. It is full of embankments of manure, which may be said to be characteristic of all the Arab mud villages; and it is not surprising to ascertain that the health of the inhabitants, whom I observed placidly smoking and talking midst all this aggregation of filth, is not to be compared with that of the freer life in the tents of the Bedouins. Hence we had a long ride to Hebron; within two hours of arriving at which the stony road was very trying, and we had a further difficulty in finding our way. Occasionally we passed patches of vineyard enclosed with stone walls.

We got to HEBRON before sundown, and betook ourselves without delay to Sheikh Omsay, the authorised agent of the Bedouin sheikhs, as well as the representative of another powerful chief, Abba di Hook, of whom we shall hear more presently.* I must record here that, when a man among the Bedouins has a son born to him, he no longer bears his own name; but he is called the father of that son: and the son acquires supreme importance in his family circle. And my long and intimate familiarity with Bedouin modes of life warrants me in testifying to the admiring homage paid to youth by these people. Nor do they forget to hold grey hairs in great veneration.

* This is a curious fact, that a town Arab should be appointed agent to the Bedouin.

When a Bedouin chief leaves his tent, he kisses his boy, and, unless he requires to use her, takes an affectionate farewell of his favourite mare; which always has her quarters in the sheikh's tent, and is reckoned of far higher importance than the wife, as the lady only too well knows. The pedigrees of these mares are incredibly far-reaching. The foal of the favourite mare has the first milk from the goats in the morning, being allowed to drink its fill of it, and accompanies its parent, when used by its owner, at a furious pace. I once told an Arab sheikh this pace would frighten an English horse-breeder. "Ah!" said he, "this is the way to train them." Their pace indeed is stupendous. One sheikh had a peculiar breed of chestnuts, of perfect beauty, whose performances eclipsed anything I ever witnessed at Astley's. But to return to Hebron.

Our negotiations with Omsay were by no means of an easy character. He was blessed with a most avaricious son, who had two wives not considered particularly honest; and their several claims upon travellers had, I suppose, to be adjusted. Anyhow it took him nearly three whole days to settle the terms on which we could secure passage through a most powerful tribe. It would be utterly impossible to traverse the region without a safe-conduct first had and obtained from this sheikh, who exercises sovereign sway. The honey here is famous for its excellence, and that with Arab bread and good milk was our enjoyable fare.

We visited the reputed tomb of Abraham, the interior of which has been open to the inspection of no traveller

save H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. Glass armlets and other ornaments of local manufacture are to be cheaply purchased here.

Our departure in the morning was not unattended with difficulty. For the forty-eighth time we had a dispute about the sum we were to pay for ensuring our safety through the land of Moab; and we were thankful to be liberated from this unspeakably wearisome contest.

Riding southward through WADY KURNAL for seven hours, during which little of interest was observable, we came up to the tent of Sheikh Ali, the head of a powerful tribe of Jehalin Arabs. He was twenty years of age, a very handsome man,—fair, with lustrous eyes and beautiful hands, such as are to be noted among Bedouins of high descent; whose majestic gait and elegant manners were most striking; in addition to which he had an attractive voice. He immediately directed a supply of coffee, which was served on an ornamental tray covered with a variegated silk napkin with heavy gold fringe—a special token of consideration. Sheikh Omsay was not long after us, and in our behalf he had audience of Ali, who, stroking my beard, engaged to do everything for us, and had his spear forthwith fixed before his tent, to denote that he had visitors to whom he desired to accord every respect. So well pleased was he with the honour of our visit to him that he said he would himself escort us to the S. E. end of the Dead Sea. We spent the day with him, during which time he showed me his horses and several remarkable individuals of his tribe, and I saw the

preparation for the morrow. For supper we had boiled gazelle, mutton, and chicken. After the repast a one-stringed Asiatic harp was introduced, which our courteous host played and sang to. I have before referred to his pleasant voice. That he now exerted, for our behoof, without intermission for the space of three hours, clearly resolved to err on the side of excess in the musical entertainment; which did not terminate even with the host's retirement for the night, for the instrument was taken up by two other Arabs, guests like ourselves, who played alternately on it till daylight did appear. Whatever we might have thought of this formidably prolonged music, it was interesting to watch the faces of about a hundred sheikhs and other men of distinction as they sat listening to our host; whose voice, giving expression now to tender sentiment and then to martial fervour, obviously found a response in their breasts.

We were up betimes next morning, when our host, who had armed himself with a magnificent spear and was arrayed in a most beautiful embroidered robe, put himself at the head of his uncle Sheikh Esau and a select band of men-at-arms for this most perilous journey. The start looked bright and cheerful: but soon we were assailed by a weary waste, bare of all vegetation save the peculiar low shrub with thorns, which is the sustenance of the goats and camels, and is also used for firing;—not a bird visible; not a sign of life of any kind: and through the divisions of the mountains we got occasional glimpses of the Dead Sea, whose stillness intensified the sense of desolation impressed on us by the lifeless scene, especially

as we neared the WADY ZUWEIREH, which conducts to the shore of the Dead Sea. The entrance to this pass was dangerously precipitous, so much so that I feared my horse, which was a young animal, would not be equal to the arduous work of ascending and descending these ravines. I was fain, therefore, closely to follow Sheikh Ali who preceded us leading his sure-footed mare. While we were engaged thus, our attention engrossed with the difficulties of the way, we were startled by the sudden appearance, from behind the rocks, of thirty nearly naked Arabs, who most menacingly levelled their long guns at us. Their heads sprang up simultaneously, as it were in a pantomime; and I had a gun pointed at me in unpleasant proximity to my ear. Had they been so minded, they might easily have despatched all of us, situated as we were, and protected as they were by the rugged character of their position. But after a short parley Sheikh Ali set matters straight, and we had the opportunity of observing these Arabs more closely. They were nearly black, and had only a cloth round the loins. They were most active in their movements, and in every way looked as if their life was a hard one, as it truly must be in this oppressively solitary place. I was lost in wonder as to how the tribe subsisted, and learned that they hunt the gazelle and kill the Syrian partridge, which is most delicious eating. It is a handsome likeness of the French partridge, and ordinarily very plump. The gazelle of the district is most venisony in flavour, and a carefully roasted haunch would well merit the praise

reserved by Sydney Smith for the salad prepared according to the witty canon's famous receipt :—

> "Serenely full, the epicure would say,
> Fate cannot harm; I have dined to-day."

In spite of the scanty food, the venison is very fat, which may be explained by the salt formation of the rocks, to which the gazelles are known to be fond of applying their tongues. These slight gastronomic particulars, however, must not make me forget to relate that our Arab bandits, after kindly supplying us with water, finally patted us on the back, and suffered us to proceed without further molestation.

On a mound in this Wady are the ruins of a grim-looking old Crusader castle, difficult of ascent; and below it is a cave which I entered in the vain hope of finding something of interest.

We had by this time descended into the valley, which I can liken only to the dry bed of a torrent, where all of vegetation that met the eye was a few acacias in full growth and one or two wild fig-trees; and we kept on winding our way till we got to the shore of the Dead Sea. As we neared it, the heat became intense. It was about three in the afternoon, and the sea was as unruffled as a mill-pond. I know not how to describe its unnatural aspect. It gave me the impression of a great mass of vagueness—this absence of life in it. The shore was strewn with endless stout branches of trees, stripped of their bark, and bleached to pure white. So large was the supply that, remembering the scarcity of wood in Jerusa-

lem, I remarked that it would be a most profitable speculation to charter camels for its transport thither.

After visiting JEBEL USDUM, the singular mountain of salt,* which bewildered me with its quaint crystal appearance, we rode on towards the Southern end of the Dead Sea, a distance of six miles. The Dead Sea, I may set down, is fifty miles long, and at certain points is said to be six miles wide. Then, striking out due East, we crossed the plain, and reached the dense forest watered by streams descending from the mountains of Moab. The thorny acacia growth sorely impeded our progress, and, the sun having set, swarms of mosquitoes assailed us. The prospect of finding a retreat for the night I began to regard as hopeless; but Sheikh Ali, to whose surpassing qualifications as a guide I was not duly alive, imparted animation to the whole company by suddenly throwing his head-dress into the air, and arresting it at the top of his spear. He had caught the faint echoes of the lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep, telling of an encampment near. These presently burst upon my less acute ears; soon we heard the barking of dogs; and wreaths of smoke curling upwards further determined our propinquity to it. It consisted of about two hundred tents,—a strong muster of Gwharanees, whose chief, a friend of Sheikh Ali's, came out to meet us with every evidence of cordiality, and, having helped us to dismount,

* I was careful to bring away a bit of it, which I have presented to my friend, Mr. F. G. H. Price, of 1, Fleet Street.

caused carpets to be laid for Ali, my companion and self; after which the usual introductory hospitality of coffee—which here was delicious—was dispensed. Shortly after, a large bowl of mutton was introduced; and, by way of signifying particular politeness, the sheikh carefully selected a piece of lean and another of fat and set my portion before me. The encampment was a very rich one, and was well provided with horses and goats, and sheep and cattle. The tribe descended into the warm valley for the winter, and emerged into the high level of Moab in the summer.

An Arab merchant from Damascus was buying the wool of the encampment, and the satisfactory prices obtained from him they were pleased to connect with our visit, which they regarded as lucky. He made payment partly in money, and partly in blue serge and cotton fabrics, together with coffee and sugar; of which last article the Bedouin makes sparing use, preferring to drink his coffee bitter.

An erroneous idea prevails that the Bedouins never cultivate the soil, by reason of perpetual wandering. The fact is that, though they are continually changing their locations, they do not change their districts; to the area of which their peregrinations are strictly confined. Thus here was growing a large quantity of Indian corn, besides barley and wheat.

Before sunrise the women are up milking the goats; which, detaching themselves from the main flock, regularly advance to the tents, soliciting lactation. About four in the afternoon, you may see the Arab shepherd

boys turning the heads of vast flocks of sheep and goats homewards, and their ambition is to bring their charges in timed as closely as may be to the setting of the sun. Horses, camels, sheep and goats—all may be descried converging to their destination as punctually as possible. It is a striking sight; and the observance of this regularity finds explanation in the fact that these boys have to go immense distances; their eagerly contested object being to secure "fresh fields and pastures new" for their several flocks.

The Bedouin tents, made of spun goats' hair, nearly always are crescent-shaped, opening towards the East, the quarter from which they expect both friends and foes, and are not allowed to be closed up, however cold the night may be. The camels, bullocks, goats, and horses (always excepting the favorite mare and her foal, which form part of the household), are ranged separately in front of the encampment, together with the dogs, from forty to fifty in number, kept to pack the wolves and hyænas, as they are trained to do. Their number alone gives them confidence, whereas one or two of them would not even bark at a wolf.

Our parting from this tribe visibly was not as cordial as had been our reception and entertainment. During the night I had felt a hand thrust through a hole in the next tent in search of any object of plunder, and in the morning I missed my gauze butterfly-net. I did not hesitate to complain of the theft, and thereby gave great offence. Apparently they did not think it exactly polite that I should express any sense of the wrong done to me.

The chief, however, rode out with us for about half a mile, when he proffered a demand for baksheesh, and I made him a small present of money; which, considering that the terms of our passage through the country had already been settled by Ali, I told him was not quite fair.

We rode on through a jungle of acacia trees and low scrub until we came to a most curious district exactly opposite to Jebel Usdum, which we had passed on the previous evening. The view here, besides being extraordinary (in the strictest sense of the word), was singularly beautiful; and I know of no parallel to the scenery unfolded to our sight. In the morning sun the salt mountains glistened far away, like so many Crystal Palaces; and, as the sun declined, a pink hue was diffused over them, producing the strangest effects. We came upon two magnificent golden eagles, with owls seated as if in stupor on leafless trees; and, as the Arab never kills owl, vulture, eagle or hawk, we were enabled to have a pretty close inspection of this Natural History scene, for they were quite undisturbed by our approach. Taking advantage of the proximity of several small streams coursing hereabouts, we all sought the refreshment of bathing; after which we ate a bit of Arab bread and a few olives: and Ali said we should, within an hour, come up with a mighty Bedouin chief. We still kept in sight of the Dead Sea, the gloom of which was relieved by the grand mountains of Moab towering on the opposite side; and our way still lay through the thorny acacia growth, which it needed Ali's keen eye to direct us through. At last, we

saw Arab boys tending cattle, from whom Ali vainly tried to learn the direction in which the tents were; for they could not be got to answer a word. The little rips crouched to the earth as if they were paralysed with fear.

There was a field of wheat here, and we saw some Arab women in it; but they also were so terrified at our appearance that we could not get to know of the encampment. We must have been the first to visit this part of the country. Ali then started to make a circle, hoping thus to find a path; and after the lapse of a quarter of an hour we heard him calling out, whereupon the other Arabs of our party shouted *Tayeb!* (All right!), and urged on their steeds with the impetuosity to be noted with all Arabs, who seem to be greatly excited by the prospect of coffee and gossip at the end of a day's journey. The path found, we were not long in reaching this tribe, whose encampment was a very extensive one, far larger than any we ever saw in Syria, for we are now in the land of Moab.

CHAPTER VI.

MOAB.

KARAK.—LEJJÛN.—RABBA.—DIBON.—HASBON.—SALT.

As soon as we were sighted approaching the encampment, great excitement prevailed. Evidently we had penetrated beyond the ordinary range of travellers. Making for the middle of the settlement, Ali, who put himself between my companion and myself, rode straight up for the purpose of introducing us in due form to the chieftain of this powerful tribe; who advanced to receive us, touching his breast, when Ali tendered the familiar salutation: "God is great, and Mahommed is his prophet." On our dismounting, the sheikh was somewhat puzzled to discover who was the greater man of the two, Mr. P. or I; but Mr. P. (on my suggestion) being indicated as the "swell" of the party, he lavished his

attentions upon him. The very best coffee was prepared for us, the sheikh himself roasting the berries and pounding them for the special occasion. The final touch of polite consideration came when he laboriously unwound a dozen wraps of cloth off a package, which turned out to be a piece of white sugar, off which he broke two small bits. The addition of sugar to our coffee was considered an immense, almost unheard of, luxury.

This chief was certainly an Ethiopian. He was almost black, and of majestic presence, and the tribe are greatly attached to him, though how he managed his election to the headship of so important a Bedouin tribe is to me inexplicable. He had been to Cairo, where he referred to the rule of Abbas Pasha, and he had evidently escaped into Moab. He luxuriated in the possession of three nice wives, by whom he had three sons, who were fine fellows. The tribe itself was very ugly, a lot of most determined-looking scoundrels, who would have forbidden sleep but for my being thoroughly tired out.

The chief ordered a sheep to be killed and several chickens, and a substantial supper was soon served up. All this civility was doubtless due to the close friendship of Ali.

We had not journeyed above an hour after leaving this encampment when we got on to a sand plain, where on a sudden we saw about five-and-forty naked Arabs advancing in line upon us, armed with a variety of offensive weapons—guns, swords, lances, daggers and clubs, and yelling at us most diabolically. I could not help thinking that, if we were to be killed, there was no

romance in meeting our end here, and at the hands of such a set of savages as those before us; but the danger struck us as extreme. They pulled me about roughly, and dealt me some severe blows. One wretch deliberately aimed his gun at me; but Ali with great pluck thrust himself before me and, seizing his gun, said we were under the protection of the Sultan and of the Queen of England, and that they would be answerable for any harm that befell us. A prolonged hubbub ensued, during which they took Esau's horse from him; but, after detaining us for two hours, they let us go, seeing that we resolutely refused to comply with their demand of baksheesh. They were a very wild tribe of wandering Arabs, somewhat small in stature, and perfectly naked; of Ethiopian blackness and preternatural ugliness; and their Jack Sheppard formation of head favoured the theory that they were the refuse of the worst Bedouin classes.

Jebel Usdum was still in view, and we made for more Arab tents, of which we presently found a large encampment in a well timbered and well watered district, in which the acacia vegetation assumed a peculiar form. We had a hearty welcome from the sheikh, a large, gaunt man, very ugly (like the generality of Arabs here) and very morose in appearance, but hospitable withal. A large wooden dish was set before us, out of which we were all to help ourselves. I remarked to Mr. P. that this meant a handsome baksheesh; but, said he, when once we are in the saddle to-morrow morning, they shall not get anything of the kind. No demand, however, was made, as I

feared it would have been. The sheikh, an able-bodied man of 65 years with scars in his face, who from personal knowledge spoke of Ibrahim Pasha in terms of high praise, introduced to us two sons of his by his favorite wife, smart lads with wonderful eyes and amiable faces. He had four wives; of whom one was very old, the first love of his youth, on whom devolved the care of his favorite Arab mare; and another was remarkable alike for her youth and her beauty. The Arab woman's life, I need hardly say, is one of great hardship, barely removed from slavery. There is no exemption from labour even for the sheikh's wives, who get up long before day-break to milk the goats, and whom you afterwards hear busily engaged with their leathern churns. If I cannot poetically say of the men that they were "up with the lark," I certainly never saw an Arab lying down after sunrise; and habits of industry in the open and the salubrity of the climate of Moab preserved their health and gave them a brightly clean aspect. This was a most devotional camp, the natives praying fervently at sundown; and I could not help reflecting that, if some of those Exeter Hall religionists who flatter themselves with the charming notion that they alone know the way Heavenward could have seen and heard the natural effusion of soul with which these people approached the Deity, there would have been considerable abatement of their spiritual conceit. The total absence of affectation—of that Sunday behaviour which we are wont to put on with our Sunday clothes, to the sad deterioration of the rest of the week—with the seclusion of the station, was powerfully affecting.

On bidding farewell to this great chieftain in the morning, he kissed our hands thrice and expressed his anxiety for our safety. We now lost sight of the Dead Sea. Karak was our next point, and we directed our course thither; but we were careful to avoid going by the usual route of Wady Karak, where Ali thought we were likely to be intercepted by strolling Arabs who might be on the look-out for us. So we made direct for the mountains. The riding here was very trying, I should say about the most difficult mortal could have. We came up to some curious clay mounds separating the sand from the mountains, and then to a shallow brook, beside which profusely blossomed oleanders, both pink and white. Our ascent now gradually began, and, adopting a private road through a small encampment, we left the beaten path that conducts to Wady Karak in the distance. We were kindly saluted as we passed through, and the Arabs seemed to be highly amused at our coming amongst them. One of the sheikhs told me he had been to Constantinople with a present of horses to the Sultan, such horses, added he, as any monarch would be proud to own. To show me that he was not altogether out of the world of intelligence, he informed me that the Sultan had been to see the Queen of England; and his fixed (I fear unalterably fixed) idea of that visit of the Commander of the Faithful was limited to the enlargement of the Royal circle. He could conceive of no other motive for his Highness' undertaking that historically famous personal inspection of England's greatness.

The views from the mountain tops were extremely

grand, and the air was most bracing; I should take this to be one of the healthiest places in the world. My constitution which had suffered so much from the effects of the climate of Central Africa seemed to revive as it were at one spring, and I felt a sudden access of youthful vigour. The pasturage was rich, the goats and sheep fat, the horses in good condition; and the inhabitants wore a look of substantial comfort. In a tent I found a Mahommedan Reader, who obviously objected to the distribution by my friend of the Scriptures in Arabic. The good man's faith was not liberal enough to think that there could possibly be any truth beyond his own circle; and I am not sure that he stands alone in that ungenerous conviction. I was struck, however, by the kindly toleration of my friend's labours by the sheikhs.

When the mists cleared off the mountains, they revealed their tops round as balls. Small patches of wheat were to be seen on either side as we ascended, with the occasional burial place of some sheikh, while the tedium of our way was relieved by the luxuriant growth of the narcissus, and the lovely home-note of the cuckoo in the Wady Karak below. Suddenly we were refreshed by sighting KARAK, which was unveiled to us by the temporary floating away of the cloud which nearly always envelopes it. The elevation of this magnificent old (reputed) Crusaders' Castle may be estimated approximately by the fact that within the last six or seven hours we had ascended over 4000 feet; and we had to progress still higher before we reached it. We were now in the midst of grand scenery, and we were reminded of the tempera-

ture to be expected at night on these mountains by seeing several donkeys laden with wood plodding upwards. At this time of the year (March) the nights here are intensely cold. Now we descended somewhat, coming to a brook beside which grew almond and fig trees in great luxuriance; the air filled with the hum of bees seeking the early flowers of spring (Karak, be it known, is famous for its honey); and again we had to face a stiff bit of work which none but Syrian horses would attempt. Access is obtained to Karak through a tunnel cut in the solid rock for about 150 feet;—a striking testimony to the patient skill and energy of its excavators in the olden time, when engineering operations were not facilitated by blasting as they now are. To get to the outer archway of this tunnel, we struggled for several hundreds of feet up the precipitous elevation whereon the castle stands. We entered Karak without molestation, and the first thing that struck us was the flat-roofed mud houses of the inhabitants; many of whom availed themselves of this shelter in the winter, and returned to the plains in summer. This was the only instance, familiar to me, of Bedouins taking to town life.

We hastened to pay our respects to a Christian sheikh,* Suleiman by name, whose residence is in the neighbourhood of the Greek church. Half of his community had already gone down to the plains; but he was detained in town by the illness of his favorite son, who suffered from

* A singular example of a Bedouin chief being Christian; and the only one example of a whole Bedouin encampment being the same.

consumption. His reception of Mr. P., whom he had before entertained, was most kind; and he generously invited us to put up with him during our stay in Karak, which after the life we had been leading with vagrant Arabs we were not loth to do; and the quaint lofty room with recesses for the accommodation of sleepers awaited us. Our arrival, owing to the missionary reputation of my companion, inflamed the jealousy of a couple of Greek priests, who, I am prepared to swear most circumstantially, had not washed themselves for 10 years, and had not changed their raiment for twelve months. (It is as well to be exact when one is about it!) How they could have fancied we were likely to injure their position, I know not; but so unmistakable were the signs of their uneasiness and consequent dejection that I lost no time in administering nips of brandy by way of medical comfort; and I found that my cognac soon brought about a healthier understanding respecting our mutual relations.

We were not unprepared for the substantial repast that was set before us. It consisted of boiled beef and mutton, pigeons, figs, delicious honey, and splendid coffee. While we were engaged on this ample provision for our wants, there burst in upon us a Syrian,—the Arabic Scripture Reader to the encampment, who rejoiced in the euphonious name of Jerias Nikar. It was the work of an instant; but, before we were hardly conscious of his intrusion, he thrust his hand into the honey-pot and consumed the entire contents. Our chance of tasting the honey on that occasion was gone beyond possibility of recovery, it being the Arab etiquette neither

to place fresh dishes nor to remove them, except empty, —the attendants addressing themselves to the remains of the entertainment. Our host took this invasion all as matter of course. To the Arabic mind possession always consecrates property. Jerias, who had been sent hither from Beyrout, and was disposed to make capital out of his having traversed the vast plains of Moab to get to his destination, gave himself all the airs (and a deal more) of an Oxford graduate, and asserted his claim to rank with us in every respect.

The produce of honey in Karak is on a very large scale. An enormous number of bees are maintained here. In almost every house in the place, near the doorway, you see about twenty receptacles, of dried clay, ranged on shelves, looking like so many drain-pipes. As I have already said, Karak is noted for its honey throughout the East, the peculiar delicacy of its flavour being accounted for by the kind of heather growing round Karak for miles, on which the bees feed; and it is largely eaten by the natives, as indeed it may be and is eaten by travellers, in virtue of its excellence. It is not cloying, like the English produce. Arab bread is an admirable vehicle for it; and I can certify that it had the best effect on the system. They withdraw the honey twice a year.

My friend Mr. P. was prostrated here by Syrian fever for a week; and I must not forget to give due prominence to the information that, in the commodious sleeping-apartment, stowed away in various recesses were the sheikh, his wife and children, together with his son and his wife, and the aged mother of the sheikh himself, an

asthmatic old lady who disturbed us the whole night with her coughing and spitting.* This was far from being agreeable, and the omnium-gatherum of society in one and the same apartment I felt to be somewhat awkward; but the Arabs objectionably are all great spitters. In the middle of the room we had a lively wood fire: yet we felt the acute cold.

I explored the castle down to its lowermost basement. It has seven storeys; of which the final one seemed to be a receptacle for human skulls and bones, of which there was an ample supply. The roof of each storey is arched, and the first two are excavated from the solid rock; the superstructure being built up with stone, of which the masonry is indeed most wonderful.

The site of Canon Tristram's encampment was pointed out to me, when the Arab chiefs held him captive.

The milk we obtained here was singularly good, and we regaled on eggs and fresh butter every day, in addition to sundry items of Arab diet which I am unable to identify in English. With pomegranates and raisins and the red wine of Jerusalem for our dessert, our fare may well be said to have been sumptuous; the provision was on the most liberal scale; yet we had great difficulty in getting enough to eat. That Arabic Scripture Reader,

* I hardly do justice to the capacity of this room. I learned afterwards that, besides those I have enumerated in the text, there were twenty more old ladies ensconced in the recesses. It was a very Hampton Court for the mothers of the princes of Moab, and these must not be deprived of their share in the grunting, groaning, and spitting.

who took twenty mouthfuls to our one, made short work with all that came within his reach. Prodigious indeed was the rapidity with which he caused things to vanish into his interior.

It was a curious sight to see two Englishmen sitting down on the floor with twenty Arabs, eating with their hands out of a large dish; and, these being covered with honey and other sticky matter, if we took a short spell for digestion, the flies hastened to give to them the appearance of plum-pudding. Jerias' ceaseless activity in eating, it is hardly worth while to mention, did not inconvenience him in the same way.

The diseases prevalent in Karak are simply referable to, and identical with, dirt. It is one of the dirtiest places in the world; every house or hut without exception swarms with vermin, the itch being quite an orthodox complaint. In fact, it is not safe to walk out for the filth. The goats are kept in every little court-yard before the door. A lazier community of men it would be difficult to find. They have no industries; and the place is celebrated only for the gifts of Nature, milk and honey. We were able to get barley here for our horses; and after a stay of six days I was not sorry to proceed on our journey.

In view of the endless treeless plains before us (for this part of Moab is entirely bare of timber), I likened our course to that of a ship just starting on her voyage. Depending as we had to do entirely on our horses, I entertained grave doubts, after looking at a rough map, of being able to accomplish the distance hence to the coast. Crossing the ravine on the north of Karak, we bore

Vincent Brooks Day & Son Lith.

SCENE IN THE LAND OF MOAB

east and subsequently north-east for five hours over the barren, undulating waste, until we reached the ruins of a town called LEJJÛN. There was nothing special to distinguish it from several smaller ones we saw on the way, or to denote any superiority of architecture. Many such we passed on the same afternoon during our three hours' ride across the uninviting country westward to RABBA. Neither people, nor flocks nor herds did we see here; nor was there any grass, the ground being covered with a small wormwood scrub. Only at intervals there were small patches of ill-grown corn where the soil seemed to be rather thicker between the bare stony hills. As we approached Rabba, however, there was a visible improvement in both the land and the crops of corn, and short grass supplanted the wormwood scrub. Cattle, sheep, goats and horses were before us; and lying in ambush as it were for one of these delicacies, I saw a solitary wolf, who trotted off upon seeing us. One or two of these predacious animals may always be found in the vicinity of the sheep. Presently we came upon a camp of about thirty tents south of the widely extended ruins, the massive columns, and the great stone water-tanks of RABBA. These mutilated remains struck me as being highly illustrative of the former magnificence of the place; the columns were very numerous; and there can be little doubt that excavations would yield large and rare results to antiquaries. The water-tanks were constructed on the model of Solomon's Pool.

The small camp which we had now reached had tents of black and white goats' hair cloth, manufactured by the

women, to whom among the Bedouins is assigned the duty of erecting and of removing the tents,—which the men never attend to. Mr. P. and I differed on the question of these people being Bedouins. I am firmly convinced they were, though they professed to be Greek Christians. There was a Greek Scripture Reader here, adorned with the Greek cassock, and hair as long as a woman's and tied up in that fashion;—the first (and I should say only) instance of a Bedouin turning parson. It is singular that all barbarians Christianised in Oriental lands should be so filthy. It cannot be that prayers and meditation occupy their time so completely that they can spare none to attend to their temporal comforts; and it is no recondite philosophy which teaches us that cleanliness is next to godliness: yet it gave me a shudder to look at the back of this creature's neck; it literally swarmed with vermin. He had been educated at a Greek school in Karak, and considered himself quite a divine; and I was vastly amused to observe the dignified repose of manner (it would have done credit to Dr. Tait) with which he gave audience to visitors. When one thinks of the fortitude involved in maintaining a majestic demeanour under such irritating conditions, it shows that the age of martyrs has not passed altogether away.

These Greek priests, let me say, do not lead the most exemplary of lives; in fact, save among the Bedouins, little morality flourishes here. They marry, but, as with the Mahommedans, their wives never appear in public.

An animated conversation in Arabic took place between Mr. P. and the sheikh of the little camp who advanced to

receive us. This tribe owned a very large flock of sheep, and derived a handsome revenue from sale of the wool; and, before we retired to rest (which was somewhat late), we had a sheep killed for our supper. As I have explained before, it is a strict rule, at least as far as I know, with the Bedouins not to produce a second supply of food. Ample provision is always made for the requirements of the whole company, and with that is an end of the feast. When, therefore, not long after we had done eating, our old gormandising and scripture-reading friend, Jerias Nikar, trotted in, he simply was dished; and I could not help laughing aloud at the rueful expression of his countenance as soon as he realised his unhappy fate. Nor did his privation terminate here; for the sheikh, giving him to understand that honour should be rendered where honour is due, hastened to dispossess him of the blankets and the comfortable Turkish pelisse which Jerias, with an eye to nocturnal comfort, had been careful to bring on with him. These the sheikh proceeded to dispose for our bed, and Jerias had to lie—self-sacrificing wight!—on the hard ground, supperless. In the morning I awoke to hear the refreshing sound of coffee-pounding. Bedouin hospitality, as my narrative has already shewn, is not niggardly. Their usual form of salutation is: "Sit down; open your heart in friendship; drink coffee; eat flesh; rest under our habitation; get up at sunrise and depart." But this fresh preparation of coffee for us was a special mark of favour, and I was not ungrateful to get it in perfection.

Though coffee is their common drink, to the Arabs it

never seems to lose the sense of a luxury, and all their comfort is centred in its enjoyment. Small as are the cups they use, it is astonishing how they spin out drinking one. The sips they take are so infinitesimal that I have seen an hour devoted to one cup. They take just enough to impart the flavour to the palate; and this prolonged sipping does, I believe, secure the proper enjoyment of it. The cups of state provided on great occasions by distinguished sheikhs are of porcelain; and, like our egg-cups, they are ranged in stands made of gold and set with precious stones, and handsomely filagreed;—in which class of ornamental work the Arabs are very skilful.

On the plains we saw large herds of black goats. The bullocks were very small, their keep being poor; but there were several good mares with foal at foot, bearing evident marks of pure Arab blood in their veins. Only the horses and sheep carried their condition in their bodies. This was a busy season with the Arab wool merchants; and I found that they were effecting their business without money, which, on the principle of barter, was represented by Persian carpets, coffee, and women's ornaments. The women here, by the way, were both small and ugly, and they did not improve matters by tattooing their faces and arms. Oppressed with the weight of domestic labour, they looked sad and weary, and apparently had lost their curiosity on the arrival of strangers. Melancholy indeed is the life of the Bedouin woman, uncheered by the society of her lord and master, for the men always muster in the guest-chamber of the

sheikh at night for the discussion of the day's news; when the talking is fast and furious, pitched so high that you cannot hear yourself speak. Lively chaff often takes place, of a highly personal style, for they are wont to illustrate every subject by comparison. Thus, one comes in looking very melancholy, and is asked the reason of his grief. "I have lost a favourite she goat," is the answer, "who had a face exactly like yours;"—when *solvuntur risu tabulæ.*

The guest-chamber, I must mention, is reserved for travellers, who are received therein by the sheikh; and their entertainment is kept up by levying contributions on the whole tribe.

Making a hurried inspection, as we passed next morning, of the singularly fine ruins of RABBA and BEIAT KUBM, we kept more to the east for Wady Mojeb, through the ruins of BALA, which, though they were of the same order as previous ones, were not quite so distinctive as the last; and we descended at the junction of the three wadys—Seideh, Makharras, and Balwha. This we considered to be the best place to cross at, being not quite so precipitous as the more westerly part. Suddenly we caught sight of a party of Arabs at the bottom, 2000 feet below. Only actual observation and trial of it can give one an idea of the character of this descent; and it would have been a most ugly place at which to encounter robbers. Now it happened that we enjoyed the society, for a day or two, of that blessed kill-joy, Jerias Nikar, and he entertained himself with the spiritual exercise of singing "Oh that will be joyful" until the

echo of the juvenile anthem was diffused over the mountain range. I had failed to interrupt him before, even when I spoke of the risk of our being thus discovered by strolling Arabs: but my companion unfortunately did not take the same view as I did of Jerias' vocalization. I availed myself, therefore, of the example of the Arabs below, to whom I called his attention. Hereupon his alarm became extreme, and he jerked out short sentences like "Oh! we shall have our throats cut"—"Our heads will be cut off"—"Our bodies will be eaten by hyænas to-night." And when, admitting the necessity of one of our party paying the penalty of death, I proposed that he of course should be the one, his terror and his bewilderment reached their climax. But we heard no more of "Oh that will be joyful" for the rest of the way. Taking my glass to reconnoitre, I observed a woman and child were of the party,—a reassuring fact which I took good care not to communicate to Jerias, lest he should make a fresh start in the vocal line. The descent was marvellous, and once or twice our horses were in great jeopardy. I had some trouble in managing my nag, which was a young Arab stallion full of pluck and fire, and therefore needed strong reining-in; but it was a treat to see my friend's little black horse "Moab" plodding quietly and steadily along. We resolved not to dismount till after the Arabs had passed us. They came up to us shortly, and were most civil; indeed they were more apprehensive of danger than ourselves, not having seen European faces before in their lives. Even for Arab travellers the way was peri-

lous. Only the day before, we learned that three of them had been murdered by other Arabs for "blood-revenge;" which among various tribes is strictly pursued. If one Arab kills another, the tribe to which the murdered man belonged will send out spies, and, be the lapse of time what it may, life will be had for life. It is an universally prevalent rule, and it is most rigidly enforced. Had these been robbers, we should have been awkwardly situated. Fortunately they were poor peasants from Karak, who were returning thither.

The river Arnon runs along this ravine between oleanders and willows; and I saw fish in it of twice the size of large minnows, but only up to the point where the salt impregnates the water, in which they would not live. We rested for half an hour by its rippling waters, and addressed ourselves with considerable satisfaction to the bit of mutton and the Arab bread with which our last host had generously provided us; and I availed myself of the opportunity to do a little washing on my own account, my duplicate woollen shirt and socks being the objects on which I expended my energy.

From 10 in the morning to 4 in the afternoon it was one prolonged ascending and descending. The path up the north bank is very steep towards the top, and comes out at the ruins of AROER; the examination of which yielded to us no results, from the short time at our disposal for that purpose, for it was getting late, and we had to seek a camp for our night's shelter.

There were no Arabs at DIBON, for which we made

straight upon leaving Aroer. The ruins extend over two hills, and out of the caves, of which the place is full, I obtained fragments of very curious pottery. We might have secured something more worthy of preservation if we had had time. But, as night was fast coming on, we were compelled to leave in search of a Bedouin encampment. Turning down the valley to the east, we found two Arab tents a mile or two further on. This was the smallest encampment we ever saw; and we discovered that the two Bedouins—one a Christian (the last Christian Bedouin I met), and the other a Mahommedan—were outlaws. The Christian satisfied himself with one wife, whereas his fellow-exile had two. Now this was a curious association; and, notoriously unsafe as it is to have dealings with so small a number, we were forced by the darkness of the night to put up here. Our quarters were far from comfortable; they could not, by reason of their poverty, provide us with carpets, and, moreover, they were very dirty; so that before I laid my blanket down I took care to sweep out a bit of the ground. A small kid was soon killed for us, and we luckily had tea in our saddle-bags. This was the first tea they ever set eyes on, but they did not like the taste of it when I invited them to drink with us. We were not particularly sorry to leave early the next morning, when, in consideration of their evident poverty, we made them a small present of money. It was a highly imprudent thing to do, under the circumstances. The sight of money inflamed their cupidity to a frantic pitch, and they instantly demanded more; and their claim was

reinforced by the wife of the Christian Bedouin, who contorted her unveiled face most miserably by way of piteous appeal. Clutching the skin over her cheek-bones, she howled dismally as though she had lost some dear relative. She also was puzzled to observe the Queen's head on the half-sovereign which her husband handed to her. That a *Sitt* (woman) ruled over men in our country, they could not be made to understand; so, waving the first finger of her right hand backwards and forwards, she exclaimed *Mushareef! Mushareef!* (I can't understand).

Our course now was eastwards along the valley, in which good grass took the place of scrub, and we saw remarkable traces of ancient terraces, doubtless once covered with vines. In the Moab plateau, particularly in the immediate neighbourhood of the sites of ancient villages, indications abound of grapes and olives* having been largely cultivated by the inhabitants, as they are to the present day in Syria. It is easy to sketch their probable mode of existence. Their flocks and herds would browse on the scanty herbage of the thin-skinned hills, corn being grown on every plot of deeper soil, and the produce of the chase would help to eke out the meagre subsistence thus obtained.

After looking anxiously about, we saw smoke ascending from behind some little hillocks, and, proceeding in that direction, we espied a large number of Arab tents distant about two miles from us, which cheered our weary hearts.

* Olives now are never seen grown in the Bedouin dominions.

We first came up with some small European tents, which we found to belong to Damascus wool-buyers; but, as we did not wish to disturb the sheikhs who were in solemn conclave with these men, we passed on to the neighbouring encampment where plenty reigned around in the shape of large numbers of cattle, goats, and sheep. One of the last was quickly killed, and potted for us; and good carpets, with saddle-bags for pillows, promised us the refreshment of sound slumber which the heavy fatigues of the last few days rendered so desirable. Savage-looking men crowded round to look at us; but the presence of the Damascus wool-buyers assured us against harm. I informed Jerias that this was the last supper he would help us to devour, and the intimation shot a pang into the heart of the glutton, who had hoped to be asked to accompany us out of the country. After supper three Arabs sat and played on one-stringed instruments airs of a curious character, while the open mouths of the assembled company proclaimed their enjoyment of the wild, imaginative music. It was a lovely star-lit night, and a fine fire of wood embers served to add to our comfort.

During the night we were disturbed by the furious barking of the dogs, the horses and the sheep running wildly about in all directions. I got up and looked out of the tent, and the discovery was soon made that a wolf had got within the encampment in defiance of the dogs, and had seized a fat ewe, the shoulder of which it damaged severely. Now, as nothing could be had out of the wolf, the Arabs looked to repair the damage out of our pockets,

the bad luck being imputed by them to our arrival. Accordingly, when we got up in the morning, Mr. P. was informed that his horse had injured the sheep by kicking it, and a napoleon was demanded in satisfaction. Meanwhile, in support of the trumped-up story, they were sulky all round, and there were no signs of getting coffee. To set matters straight, I made a small present, which had the desired effect of reinstating us in their good graces, and all due civility was observed towards us. And now, just as we were leaving, Jerias provided us with some entertainment at his own expense. No sooner had he mounted his mule than the animal became very restive, and finally, after executing sundry lively movements to the intense consternation of its rider, it concluded by sending him flying overhead. It was a most amusing scene, and the Bedouins, who take no little delight in rough fun, enjoyed the mishap amazingly. Poor Jerias, rubbing himself all over, protested in tearful accents that he was "killed," and a right royal row he did kick up. The incident was laughable enough, but it was somewhat unfortunate for us, inasmuch as it delayed our start, and made our parting from him here a matter of some difficulty. Pretending that he could never venture to mount the mule again, he accompanied us for at least half a mile on foot, when, as the time of parting could no longer be postponed, he signified that he was "very much feared for us," and cheered us with the prospect of being killed; —we should never reach Salt! All this was presented to us in the most excited manner, and was introductory to the usual solicitation of pecuniary assistance; to which

I resolutely turned a deaf ear, well knowing that the Mission at Beyrout would supply him with all necessaries. Such was his pertinacity, however, aggravated by hypocritical concern for our safety, that it took some time to get rid of Jerias mentally, as we had done with him in the flesh.

Excepting the well-watered lowlands, which are of very limited extent, the land may be said to be bare of corn; in which respect it offers a marked contrast to the rich plains of Philistia, Acre, and Esdraelon.

The ruins of Moab impress the observer with a sense of the solidity and grandeur of the structures. The stones are very massive, and the masonry evidently was of a high order. Out of such an extent of desolation it is of course impossible to arrive at any definite conclusion as to the past architecture, though the scientific world is always ready to proclaim its judgments with the aid of some fanciful theory; but I feel confident that we shall be enabled by systematic excavations to arrive at sound conclusions respecting it. There are evidences here of a higher antiquity than that of Petra; and we must live in hope of the revelation in due time of remarkable antiquities, though I should decline (with thanks) to go digging among these Bedouins.

I had hoped to find some remnants of the Moabite Stone, but it was like looking for a needle in a bottle of hay. It was smashed to pieces, and mutilated beyond recognition, in consequence of the fussiness of a missionary now resident near Jerusalem, who made such a hubbub with the German Consul that the Bedouins, terri-

fied into believing that the Stone was the record of some treaty or law by which the Turks would seek to claim special jurisdiction over them, quietly broke it up. For this irreparable loss to Biblical History we have to thank a bustling missionary and a too inflammable Consul. At Jerusalem I know that many plausible excuses are given for it; but these are the facts of the case; and no contradiction of so notorious a matter will ever avail to deceive intelligent people.

There is little of note in the ruins of UM RASAS, MADEBAR, and other places. They are merely the ruins of deserted towns, which evidently were of small extent. This was the first country in which I witnessed the remains of town after town left completely deserted,—without a sign of either animal or vegetable life around.

The almost complete drought occasioned by the long dry season accounts for the stuntedness of the bullocks, which by the arrival of the rainy season are in so poor, starved a state that it takes all the time to get into condition, to say nothing of growth. The camels here are not of a fine class, nor are the sheep particularly good. Indeed it requires an effort of the mind to believe that rich and powerful people ever could have existed in this region, unless some violent convulsion of Nature has since taken place, for it is a thin-skinned ground, altogether an unprofitable soil—immense districts reaching far into the interior, which we arduously crossed, nothing but arid stony deserts, at once so melancholy and so difficult that

the apprehension of our horses knocking up filled us with alarm for our fate.

We now directed our course to Hasbon for Salt, during which we traversed vast plains and saw numerous Bedouin encampments. Life among the Bedouins, however, is so uniform that I need not expatiate on the subject of our putting up with them any further.

A strange domestic practice prevails among the Bedouins, not those in villages but those of the wandering class. They pickle their infants after three days old, in strong brine. I learned that it was a habit consecrated to them by a long antiquity; and it is based upon the notion that the process, which extends over several hours, imparts hardness to the tender skin. The immersion is said to be fatal to delicate babies. Be the effect of the pickling what it may, however, no labour is wasted on the children in the way of washing them afterwards. They are suffered to grow up in utter ignorance of the cleansing virtues of water; the superstition being that the evil eye might be attracted to their comeliness. Accordingly, I have seen them with regular crusts—thick deposits—of dirt on the top of their heads, and their eyes full of flies.

In the country surrounding HASBON I saw some good corn land. Bedouins, as a rule, are not so devotional as the town Arabs. I was therefore struck by observing two Bedouin sheikhs saying prayers in the midst of one of the patches of wheat. These gentlemen, who by the way are not singular in thinking that the operations of Nature

should be made to serve their own individual interests, to the derangement of the general economy, were beginning to be anxious about the harvest. The crops were looking very bad, and there were other signs of great scarcity. We stopped the night with a sheikh who was very rich in cattle, who was polite enough to consult us as to our taste for mutton or fowl. In the course of several years' wandering about the world, my motto always has been: "stick to meat;" I have always contrived to get a bit of it, if possible; and twelve hours in the saddle—over such country too!—really required us to fortify the system. There was something in his face which made me feel sure that he would exact baksheesh in the morning. However, we made ourselves as agreeable as we could; and in the course of the evening he insisted that I should dance before him;—he would not hear of a refusal. I protested that I could not dance without music. It was all in vain; dance he would have me; so, seeing there was nothing for it but to comply, I turned up my trousers, and, striking a large copper tray with a splendid jingle in it, did the ballet. I am not sure that I can claim the merit of having on this occasion exhibited the graces of the "*light* fantastic toe," and it is just possible that I may not have won the admiration of the *habitués* of Drury Lane or Covent Garden: but, being in good physical trim at the time, I executed sundry highly irregular, yet athletically commendable, feats which delighted the company. The triple gyration of my body on the toes extorted their special applause. The Bedouins never dance themselves; but evidently that

circumstance did not bar their enjoyment of my saltatory exertions.

Some idea of my anxiety to astonish the natives may be had from the fact that I maintained this exhibition of my powers for about two hours, during which I endeavoured to impart as much variety of measure as I was master of. Nor was song altogether wanting, for I gave them "The Perfect Cure," the accompanying contortions of which piece of insanity, I found, carried off the prize of their approbation. Perhaps, like their educated betters under similar circumstances, they discovered some hidden meaning in that abnormal example of the "poetry of motion." After all this I felt not only exhausted but convinced that I had fully earned our entertainment that night. But I had an uneasy suspicion all along that we should have trouble with this man.

He entered into a long conversation with us afterwards. He said he had heard at Jerusalem two years ago that Englishmen could do anything, everything but save life; and he meant to visit Egypt before he died, to see carriages go without horses, for he had been informed by Egyptian jugglers and acrobats, passing here at intervals, that these carriages went all the way from Scandaruni (Alexandria) to Suez, from sunrise to sundown, being propelled by "effreets" (demons), whose breath might be occasionally seen issuing from their bellies. My dancing had inflamed his mind to appreciation of the indomitable energy of the Anglo-Saxon race!

Then he made numerous inquiries about England, his interest centering in the curiosity to know how people

were served when they did not pay taxes, and whether the Queen ever had the heads of her subjects chopped off. I was most careful to inform him that no one was executed except murderers, who never escaped the vengeance of the law, however remote they might be.

Our horses beginning to betray symptoms of fatigue, we gave them an extra feed of barley in the morning (Bedouins always feed their horses well), and then we decided on starting. It was quite 8 before we got off, and the sheikh attended us on a beautiful grey mare. We did not proceed far, however, before he quietly put out his hand, saying "Baksheesh!". I was not altogether impressed favorably by him; so, thinking discretion the better part of valour, I tendered him a quarter Turk pound; which he most disdainfully refused to accept. We jogged on as though nothing had occurred to disturb the course of our friendship, until he demanded "three napoleons," to which definite claim I responded with *Mafeesh!* "I will have three napoleons," insisted he; whereupon I told him we thought he was our friend. This seemed to stagger him; the notion of disinterested and unremunerated amity obviously was one not understood by him. He became very violent and, brandishing his spear, insisted upon having that sum. When he found he failed to practise on our fears, he indulged in strong sneering expressions and gradually fell away from us. We congratulated ourselves on our escape from him, and had gone a good way on, when we were made somewhat uncomfortable by hearing him again in pursuit of us. In high tones and a most excited manner he reinforced his

demand; but, when he saw he could get nothing out of us, he vented his indignation by calling us "Christian dogs" and bidding us "go!" We did not decline to avail ourselves of the permission so kindly accorded; yet we could not reckon on our escape, for these men brood over matters and act on sudden impulses that defy sober calculation. On this occasion, however, we had no further trouble. We came across much partridge, and we sighted numbers of large cranes. These birds, which the Arabs call birds of good fortune, are never killed by them, and you may frequently see them in the immediate neighbourhood of the herd-boys.

After leaving Hasbon far behind us, we began to see in the distance something partaking of the character of woodland scenery; and in the afternoon we passed through a beautiful wooded district, where we saw a fine herd of gazelle grazing. This was the first timber I had seen in Moab, and, as we progressed, there was a very large extent of forest, with most inviting views. We regretted there were no Arab tents to enable us to pull up here for the night and start for Salt next morning; but we had to press on for Salt without this desirable interval of rest, and we watched with anxiety for signs to indicate that we were somewhere near.

We descended to a ravine, after getting through which we caught sight of European shaped tents. This amazed us, and we were lost in speculation as to the phenomenon when, on nearing the place, we saw about forty magnificent Arab stallions, and Turkish troops lounging about. Only travellers who have gone through such regions as we had

know what a feeling of excited gratitude comes over one upon witnessing such evidences of security. We soon learned that they were the mounted patrol, going out to certain Bedouin encampments to collect taxes. The soldiers, saluting us in most respectful Turkish fashion, inquired where we came from and whither we were going. When we informed them that we were from Karak and bound to Salt, they looked amazed, exclaiming *Tayeb!* (good!)

Declining their kind invitation to stay with them that night, we urged our horses on, and by observing the return of cattle * knew we were near some place of shelter; and soon we were gratified by hearing the echo of voices in a distant valley. Two large Syrian owls that hooted dolefully only served to increase the gloom of our position. A very steep ascent awaited us, and on reaching its summit we saw afar off three boys driving herds of cattle towards what we knew was our destination. The road now became most difficult; immense boulders of stone lay in our way; and, to make matters worse, the night became quite dark. Suddenly I made the unwelcome discovery that I had lost my friend, after whom I hollaed in vain. How I should have managed to extricate myself from this awkward position, I know not, but for the fortunate presence of an Arab

* A little further on we met a cow which had been overlooked by the boys who had driven the herd on. Realizing her danger with the sure instinct of cattle as to wild animals, she bellowed piteously. She would have had small chance of escape from the hyænas if she did not regain the herd.

boy who, seizing the rein of my horse, guided me on to a kind of path beside a stone wall—the Sultan's highway into the vast Turkish stronghold which to the Bedouins is a lasting memorial of the Sultan's might. On turning the corner of this rocky locality, my ears were assailed by a tremendous rolling roar, caused by the union of the barking of hundreds of dogs with the dash and splash of a rapid torrent near at hand. All in a moment the lights of SALT became visible. The transition from the darkness by which we had just been enveloped to this display of brightness (for every lattice had a light) was most striking in effect; and, when I heard the bugles sounding, I was thankful to be assured of safety under the protection of the Sultan's troops;—and my satisfaction was completed by overtaking Mr. P., from whom the darkness had divided me.

We proceeded to the house of a Syrian, who, having settled here, acts as agent to a merchant of Jerusalem for the sale of cotton fabrics. On being ushered into the guest-chamber, where Arabs were seated in conclave, I was so exhausted that I fell down. Now, the Arab invariably connects the fainting of an Englishman with drunkenness, and consequently, bursting into loud laughter, they would not render me any assistance; for which I was indebted to my friend, who was not overcome like myself, thanks to the easier paces of his horse. The fare provided for us here, though not sumptuous, was sufficient to carry us on to the morning.

Though it was late, and the Arab seldom ventures out at night, our arrival, we soon came to see, was well

announced, several people calling to pay their respects to Mr. P. Among them was a handsome and accomplished young Syrian, who came with a copious story of his troubles. He had been appointed by the Bishop of Jerusalem to the post of schoolmaster at Salt. During a period of extreme distress he had lent £40 to a man, to enable him to purchase rice with, charging a fair per centage for the loan. From all we heard, it was a perfectly fair and legitimate transaction. When the Arab was pressed for payment, which he sought to evade, he requited the Syrian's kindness by getting it bruited that he was in the habit of practising usury. This soon reached the ears of the son-in-law of the Bishop, a German missionary not remarkable for suavity of temper (who, by the way, has the unchallenged distribution of vast sums of money sent to him from gullible England); and he, accessible to the wily influences brought to bear upon him by the Arab, lost no time in depriving him of all local European sympathy, and finally in procuring his dismissal from the post; and there the poor fellow was, apparently a ruined man. He told us he had been promised by another missionary on Mount Lebanon that a collection should be set on foot to enable him to start on his own account; but, when I remembered that gentleman was notoriously afflicted with a bad memory, I was not inclined to congratulate him on the brightness of his prospects. This case really excited my sympathy. The missionary, who is known to suffer from the liver complaint, is a most irritable man, and therefore ill qualified to conduct an investigation in a judicial spirit—not to say

that he is, by vice of temper, hardly the man to be a Christian exemplar; and yet the poor Syrian's career of usefulness lay at the discretion of such a one to be ruthlessly cut short. His success in driving knowledge into the youthful Mahommedan mind was remarkable; I was struck by the way he got the boys on; and this only made me regret the more that missionary enterprise should be associated hereabouts with such unpromising elements.

Early in the morning we had the honour of a visit from the *khimekar*, or Major of the town,—an Ethiopian of surpassing politeness whose dandyism, heedless of the violence of the contrast, arrayed itself in white European raiment—who expressed his surprise at our ride through Moab. We went out on a tour of inspection of Salt, but found it no easy matter to get about, owing to the position of the town being on the side of a rock. It is a very healthy place, and would be altogether unexceptionable if it were not for the accumulation of dung-heaps before the doors. I saw here a most beautiful breed of poultry, white and of the same thick-set shape as the silver pencilled Hamburgs. They are great layers, and make famous eating;—a breed that seems to be almost by itself, as I saw it only in one other place in the East.

Our next care was to obtain a guide to put us on the right road to the River Jordan, which is just twelve hours from Salt.

As we got out of the town, our course lying through vine and fig gardens, a charming scene presented itself below—our first glimpse of the (as it is viewed from this

side) singular valley of the Jordan. We diverged from the road to see an old Bedouin sheikh. This great and distinguished man had a wonderfully patriarchal appearance, the settled melancholy of his face bespeaking acute sorrow and mortified pride. In his day he exercised sway over (it is said) more than 70,000 Bedouin followers. After long setting the Sultan's troops at defiance and inflicting considerable damage upon them, his followers finally were defeated by the improved rifles with which the Turkish troops were supplied, and he himself was taken prisoner. After a long period of incarceration arrangements were made for his release under certain restrictions. All these restraints, coupled with the loss of power, converted the mighty, active, horse-riding sheikh into the poor, docile, sit-at-home old man. It did one's heart good to observe the profound respect and tenderness with which his sons—fine fellows worthy of such a sire—waited on the venerable hero. Grey hairs are honoured in Moab as they are *not* in places claiming to be the head-quarters of civilisation and all the virtues, where "Mrs. S. A. Allen's Hair Restorer," and "the Balm of Columbia," reparative of Time's ravages, yield such fortunes to their spirited proprietors. We took coffee with the grand old chief, who sought no baksheesh, and then rode on.

In our progress we passed a large field with about forty Arab ploughs at work; the bullocks, of a fawn colour, rather larger than usual. About four in the afternoon we got on to the plain of the valley, where the barley was growing in great luxuriance. After a long

ride across this plain, on which we seemed to make no impression, we reached some formations of white clay with salt deposits for their base, and with salt springs running between them. In many places the passage was very precipitous, and in the dark would be attended with great danger. As soon as we got through here, we came out into a well-irrigated district, the water being brought in courses from the Jordan, and we watched the Arabs letting in and shutting off the supply. The water was excellent, and was most acceptable to both our horses and ourselves after the salty dust we had so long endured.

Here we heard the "bul-bul," or Syrian nightingale. This was a jolly change for us, and, when we besides heard the chirping of numerous sparrows, their little notes of "Cheer up!" quite Anglicised us; to which inspiriting elements I must add the sight of the Jordan, assuring us as it did that we had got out of the land of Moab and beyond the range of danger from those wild hordes, who may be said to be the most difficult of any barbarians in the world to get on with.

CHAPTER VII.

NABLOUS.—NAZARETH.—ACRE.—TYRE.—SIDON.—BEYROUT.

To enable us to set foot again on Syrian soil, we had to invoke the assistance of the Arab ferryman whose hut stands on the other bank. He did not respond to our shouts for his services for a long while; but, when he did turn up, we soon effected the transit.

We lost no time in availing ourselves of the presence of a few Bedouin tents nigh our landing-place, for the purchase of milk, which just then we were in frame to do justice to; and, purchasing a kid, we had it dressed for us in the usual way (*i.e.* boiled). At the conclusion of our repast, we found that we could not obtain accommodation for the night. Both the ferryman and the Bedouins positively refused to give us shelter, although the night was intensely cold; so there was nothing for

us to do but, wrapping ourselves in our blankets, to camp out on the hard ground under the stars. And in the morning, when I woke with stiff joints, our inhospitable neighbours required payment for the permission they had given us to sleep (as best we could) *sub Jove!* This was a claim I was in no humour, under the circumstances, to discharge, and I succeeded in letting them speedily understand that we were not to be trifled with. During the night, too, an Arab tried to steal our most precious possession—the small supply of rusks which we regarded as our Savings-Bank, to be invaded only on extreme emergency. These rusks were made expressly for our journey by a Greek baker at Gaza (they were the only ones to be had in Syria); and the ruffian who meditated their abreption from our saddle-bags tasted the quality of my stick about his person.

Clearing out before six in the morning, we soon got well on our road to Nablous, which is a good 14 hours' ride hence. We were still in what is called the Valley of the Jordan, a well watered country in which the corn was just coming to ear and had a remarkably healthy look. The fields were alive with thousands upon thousands of sparrows, which the Arabs were doing their best with stone-slings to drive away; and we put up many quail during the ride. For near four hours our way lay through groves of acacia, of which every individual tree seemed to be literally covered from top to bottom with sparrows' nests. Such an aggregation of sparrows I never before saw, and their chatter was so volumed by their numbers that it put conversation out of the ques-

tion. It was one vast Sparrow Colony; and they were so impudently tame that you might almost put your hand upon them. And what their numbers emboldened them to do I witnessed soon after, in the expulsion of two sparrow-hawks that had been guilty of the rashness of visiting this quarter. They were mobbed by thousands upon thousands of the sparrows, who enveloped them as with a cloud in the air and drove the imprudent intruders away.

On we went until we arrived at some caves, where we saw an Ethiopian Arab grinding corn—the first example that came under my observation of a man at this labour, which heretofore, as I noted, was done by women. This was a very solitary spot, one that offered special facilities for an attack upon us; and we were not sorry, setting spurs to our horses, to leave the caves far behind. The district we rode through was well watered, the Arabs busily engaged in irrigating the ground. About three in the afternoon we made a short halt at a roadside village, at the entrance of which was an olive grove. Here eggs were to be had in great abundance; and the Arabs most civilly insisted on our taking lebbin. There were some fine specimens of men in this village; and indeed the tribes continued to be of marked superiority up to Nablous. Our road along here was very picturesque. We had just crossed a small stream hedged with oleanders on both sides, when we caught sight of Bedouin tents in the distance, and it was not long before we were pursued by several horsemen clamouring for baksheesh. On expressing our inability to comply with their requisition on the

score of our being only poor hadjis, they vented their incredulity in violent gesticulation. Seeing that this expenditure of animal energy made no impression upon us, their chief (a handsomer Syrian I never met) began to laugh, and asked us to allow him to escort us to Nablous, for which his charge would be only £4;—an offer we refused to entertain. They kept behind us, pestering, for some time, until their patience was exhausted, and we were suffered to proceed in quiet.

We passed a cave-house—combination of mud and rock—in which, apart from mankind, lived a Syrian, with his wife and son, whose means were represented by a numerous flock of goats. We rode up to it and got some lebbin, for which we thankfully paid. Hence our ride was up a very steep ascent, and, after skirting another beautifully situated Syrian village encompassed with olive trees, we got on to a plain, whence we fancied we could descry Nablous, rightly, as we we reassured by a Syrian who had been made a missionary, whom we met soon after, like ourselves, bound to Nablous. As we approached the town, we passed the New Turkish Barracks, and the soldiers invited us with signs to dismount and sit at meals with them. We were rather tired by our heavy ride, and this generous display of hospitality was very provocative of appetite; but we resolved, when we did get out of our saddles, to do so for good for the night, and therefore pursued our weary way. A vast number of boys and girls (all of whom no doubt would have escorted us) positively shrieked at us to go and look at Jacob's well; and these were succeeded by hundreds of

lepers begging alms, whom we had considerable difficulty in keeping off. Throughout Syria a strong feeling prevails that the disease is contagious; and, as they are forbidden the town, they haunt the outskirts and plague travellers. Escaping from these tormentors, we were not long in reaching NABLOUS, our access being gained through very narrow and dirty streets; and we got a warm welcome from the wife (an Englishwoman) of our missionary friend, who proposed to entertain us during our stay.

NABLOUS, as is well known, is one of the oldest existing towns in Syria, and contains one or two quaint examples of Eastern architecture. I was struck by the abundance of fine vegetables grown here, the soil being very good.* This contributes greatly to the comfort of domestic life and the general health of the people. Here, as in almost all other parts of Syria, the chief ambition of the Arabs is to acquire small shops, in which they set up as traders on their own account, with no little pride as to their commercial position in the world. The capital needed for these efforts at independence does not exceed many shillings; and, once in their little boxes of shops, they seem to pass their lives in a state of perfect contentment.

During our visit here, a great sensation was caused by the violent conduct of some Turkish officials who had demanded double the amount of taxes due by two needy

* Mount Carmel is covered with the prickly pear, the fruit of which the natives relish.

men. The poor fellows either would not, or could not, satisfy the unjust claim; whereupon they were seized, bound, and beaten. Their oppressors, however, little imagined what would follow. Impunity had so long emboldened them that the thought of their victims asserting themselves never troubled them. But the two men quietly escaped to the coast, took the steamer to Constantinople, and, taking advantage of one of the opportunities presented by the Sultan's procession to the mosque for prayer, rushed into his presence and fortunately secured the delivery of their petition of complaint into his own hands. The Sultan read it, and directed the institution of an inquiry into the conduct of the officials, which resulted in their degradation. Great was the agitation of Nablous thereat.

Our horses having been carefully attended to in view of the long ride before us to NAZARETH, we got off early in the morning;—it would take thirteen hours to reach our destination. Every village we came up to was introduced by its grove of olives, whose patriarchal appearance harmonised with that of their owners. I thought we should have had some trouble to shake off an Arab who came after us on horseback out of one of these villages; but the sight of other passengers along the road protected us against the possibility of harm. Applying for shelter at another, we were angrily bidden to be off. We should have been glad of the break in the journey; but, as it was not to be, we had to continue our ride to Nazareth. The night being dark, and the path just before we ascended into the town being both

slippery and rocky, my friend's horse, sure-footed as he was, rolled over—luckily without hurt to either rider or animal; and our position was not the most comfortable in the world. Fortunately we were very near the town, on finding ourselves in which we made straight for the Monastery; the monks of which may be presumed to belong to the most rigid order of recluses, for these gentlemen kept us waiting an hour before they attended to us. We had disturbed them at their devotions! This was an unpromising beginning; and the sum of our ill luck was reached when, by reason of its being the season of Lent, coffee was all that was offered to us; we could get nothing to eat. But for the rusks we had in store, I don't know how we should have managed. It happened that we were extremely hungry, and really required food after our exhausting day's ride; but we had to appease hunger as best we could; satisfying it was out of the question. I trust it will not be set down to malice when I add the information that these monks were a refractory set deported from Italy to Nazareth by way of penance; and evidences abounded of the severity of the discipline to which they were subjected. However this may be, some among them were very agreeable fellows; and in the course of travel through Syria you will find many who have been shoemakers, tailors, and the like, who have managed with influence to get sent out here, where they lead lives of dirt and idleness. Their country, I cannot help thinking, profited by their absence. In the words of Barrington's famous prologue, their patriotism is attested by the fact that

"They left their country for their country's good."

Our exhaustion secured the benefit of sound sleep, and in the morning we set out for ACRE. We were just twelve hours without adequate food. This is the loveliest ride in all Syria, the beautiful woodland scenery brightened with spring flowers, and diversified with good crops of corn, fine bullocks, and a magnificent breed of Arab horses, chiefly chestnut. On effecting the descent, we got on to the plain of Acre, the soil of which, black and rich, is the best in Syria. Stretching away, on either side of us, were endless fields of wheat coming into ear, and of barley; and with the glass I could descry the minarets at Acre, and began to long for its delicious sea-air. As we rode on, we met great caravans of camels newly arrived from some far interior district, laden with corn. It was a wonderfully pleasant day; and the distant glimpse of the cheerful blue of the Mediterranean quite invigorated our spirits (which sadly needed the tonic) with the certain knowledge that soon we should be able to buy some sort of food. By way of anticipation, however, we overtook an old man with baskets of oranges on his donkey, and we luxuriated in the fruit, the acid of which was highly agreeable after our parched ride.

Acre abuts, as it were, into the sea; and crossing a portcullis we went through a very heavy gateway guarded by troops, for be it remembered that the worst criminals are sent here from all parts of Syria. Somewhat afraid that we should not be admitted, we made all possible

haste towards the Monastery, and it was only after a long discussion amongst the immates that we got in. The fare they gave us was wretched, and the wine execrable; but we were in no condition to be nice or exacting in our requirements; and, had stewed Syrian donkey been set before us, we should have addressed ourselves energetically to the stout dish. We made up our minds not to stop long here, where peace and good-will evidently did not reign among the brethren;—those priests seemed to be always quarrelling; and it did not require any very strong mental effort to separate ourselves from them.

The court-yard of the Monastery was filled with mules, donkeys, horses, goats and camels; and no little amusement did we derive from the spectacle of this miscellaneous gathering of animals, from our post of observation on the verandah; whence I employed myself in throwing stones at the muleteers who attempted to steal the barley from our horses to feed their animals with. Had we not seen to the horses ourselves, they would have got but little. Plunder, plunder is the order of the day throughout Syria, and you have to be perpetually on the alert to prevent it in every department of life.

It was most unfortunate for us that we should be travelling in monkish latitudes while Lent was on. To complete the story of our discomfort here, I must record that carrot soup was the provision for our wants, and dearly did we pay for it in the morning, when we settled with the monks.

Bound to TYRE, our course ran through the orange gardens of Acre, which do not equal those of Sidon; where both the oranges and lemons are very good. The temperature of the morning was delightful, the heat subdued by a fine breeze from the sea, and the perfume from the gardens lent an additional charm to the ride; and I am not ashamed to confess that, taking a more material view of things, I looked forward with eagerness to proper refreshment of the inner man at Tyre. Perhaps the acknowledgment will be voted highly unpoetical by the sentimental reader, and perhaps I really am not as impressible as I should be by the delicate influences of scenery; but it may be questioned if an empty stomach is exactly the qualification for enjoying these pleasures. Not to put too fine a point on it, these long rides make one long for food.

Tyre was visible for some distance, and as we passed on our way we saw several fishermen. They are a hardy race of men, their occupation accounting for their healthy character; and it was interesting to watch them throwing their nets, at which they are great adepts, their skill being the result of long and severe training. Fishing is the principal occupation of the place; so we were confident of a hearty fish supper, if we failed to obtain anything else. On arriving at our destination, an Arab took us through an arch, and, when our horses had climbed up some steps, we were introduced to an empty room which he began to sweep out for our reception, while others busied themselves in bringing in charcoal to make up a fire in the middle of it. (There is a large charcoal

industry in the neighbourhood.) The fire duly kindled and other dispositions affecting our comfort made, I sallied forth to buy the fish,—which was singularly good; and for the first time for a long while we had a sufficiency of food. Nor did we neglect to look after our horses, which, being tied close to our door, we had the satisfaction of knowing were not defrauded of their well earned food.

The ride to SIDON was also exceedingly interesting. For nearly the whole way we kept on the beach, to which was wafted the delicious perfume of the orange groves; and, meeting a company of Turkish troops, we received the courteous salutes of the whole party. On our arrival at Sidon, which may be said to be a sister town to Tyre, we put up at an Arab caravanseray, where we secured a bit of mutton and good olives. The room in which we lodged was full of natives playing backgammon, jabbering and wrangling over their various losses and gains. Gambling, as I have before remarked, is a prevalent vice all over the East.

Starting next day for BEYROUT, we quickly got into the region of the Mountains of Lebanon. The cultivation of the mulberry is conducted here on a very large scale and with the greatest particularity, on terraces. Every year the tree is severely pruned in all its branches, which, stripped of their leaves, serve to feed the young silk-worms. In less than ten days the tree begins to shoot out again. The culture of the silk-worm has the greatest

attention directed to it. From strict inquiry I learned that the average quantity of silk realised by each grower is £16 a year. Their management of the silk-worm is most scientific, stimulated as it is by the condition that whole Arab families depend for their subsistence on the produce.

Like all mountain scenery, that around here is very fine, but nothing extraordinary. On one or two points of the Lebanon the snow continues frozen all the year round. It is transported by an enterprising merchant to Beyrout, where it finds a ready sale among the ships that arrive at that port, and it is also largely consumed in the mountain villages, in which it is highly esteemed as a febrifuge. The mention of snow irresistibly reminds one of the famous iced drinks made by the Arabs, of which the very thought causes the mouth to water. As a rule, it is known that Mahommedans object to the use of ice; but in these places, where the heat sometimes is very distressing, they wisely make an exception in its favour.

A large proportion of the population of Lebanon consists of Christian Maronites (under the protection of France) and Catholics, who possess ample monasteries. The Druses too abound in these mountains. They are the most deceitful of all Oriental creedists, worse even than the Copts, being influenced by an utterly unnatural avarice which impels men and women alike to the adoption of any means, be they what they may, for getting money. I have seen several instances of the most acute craft employed in compassing their ends. Robberies and

murders frequently occur, and are generally traced to the Druses.

Religious life here is varied by the eccentricities of a missionary, who strives (most successfully) to mitigate the evils of existence in a very comfortable abode. One day he leans to admiration of the Plymouth Brethren; the next he sympathises with the Latin Church; and so on; his opinions apparently not having had time to crystallise themselves into definite convictions. All creeds in their turn, therefore, expend their ridicule upon him. But his chief function seems to be that of Head Flunkey to a lady who gets £11,000 a year from England for the education of about 60 Syrian girls,—a glorious rate of remuneration per head! Her house cost £30,000 to build. It is a palace equal to that of the Sultan at Constantinople; and, when first I observed the marble walls of the lovely place, a sense of misdirected energy overcame me, and I asked myself in a fine fit of moral enthusiasm why I had not applied my time to the lucrative profession of a Missionary. Certainly there are people in this world who don't fail in working out at least one half of the puzzling speculation connected with the late Dr. Binney's name, "Is it possible to make the best of both worlds?"; and I must reckon this lady in that select class.

Presenting myself in my ordinary travelling attire, I seemed somewhat to outrage this high-minded dame's sense of propriety by the intrusion. Had I exhibited visible tokens of wealth on my person, my reception no doubt would have been different; but my rough exterior

forbade hope of baksheesh for the school, and her demeanour was accommodated to the despair of that object. I was determined, however, to inspect the various works of art contained in the sumptuous edifice; and I therefore hastened to relieve her mind of the fear with which it was clouded, that I might be importing into the precincts entomological specimens from the Bedouin sheikhs of the wilderness, by assuring her that my clothes had been properly baked, and that the cracking of the poor insects was distinctly heard in the oven, so she need be under no apprehension as to her establishment being increased. For the sake of all concerned, I do trust that this school will be thoroughly overhauled. It is scandalous that the money so liberally provided for the high purpose of education should have application so wasteful as well as so eminently calculated to encourage idleness. The system of inspection in vogue is unworthy of the name. Those who are sent for the purpose soon have their critical faculties dulled by social influences; the most flattering accounts are circulated and impressed with the weight of authority, and facts and figures do not obtain due recognition. The very statement that sixty girls represent an annual expenditure of eleven thousand pounds at once condemns the system pursued; and I may add, as a small illustration of the current extravagance, that one item is £500 a year paid to a Dutchman as Secretary, just as if the work could not be discharged without that aid. This is one of many places in the East where, quite unsuspected by good, easy, charitable Britons, people help one another in the laborious office

of doing nothing. Seriously, when one reflects on the sacrifices made at home to enable heads of households to support these institutions, no words can be too strong in reprobation of waste so stupendous.

The appointments of the house are most sumptuous, with frescoes painted by Italian artists, and marble floors; and the cookery is in keeping with the rest of the establishment, at least for the first table; the governesses being lodged and boarded separately, in the detached school-house, where it may be safely assumed that they do not fare so well. The carriage is of the best Long Acre build, and is drawn by a pair of stylish Arab horses. All the surroundings, in fact, bespeak the state of people in England with £10,000 a year. I wonder if the Earl of Shaftesbury is aware of all this waste of means, and what he thinks of a system of education which culminates in the marrying of Syrian girls arrayed in white satin and pearls. Now this was a spectacle I saw myself; and the justification urged against objections raised to the preposterous and hurtful exhibition was that it was a great encouragement for other girls to go in for civilisation, to be married in white satin and pearls! The occupier indeed has quite a mania for amusing herself with every variety of gorgeous shows —show house, show carriage, show weddings, etc. Does the British public know that it pays so dearly for the gratification of her expensive tastes? And I am not sure that the girls gain so very much by the adoption of this vaunted "civilisation." This I do know, that they lose all the modesty of demeanour inseparably associated with

the Oriental character. Without the seclusion imposed by their former mode of life, and being no longer veiled, they become very forward in manners, and are far from being appreciated in their own homes as of yore.

When any distinguished traveller calls, the missionary is sent for to do honour to the occasion; but, as my exterior sufficiently denoted my inferiority, I had not the inestimable advantage of his copious dissertations on the serenity of things in general and of this establishment in particular. Nor was I invited to partake of its hospitality. "No baksheesh!" was only too legible on the person of the reader's humble servant.

The master of the establishment claims a title, and uses the arms, I believe, of an illustrious house. He may frequently be seen running about Beyrout. One day, as I was walking with a charming friend of mine, he surprised us by suddenly addressing us with—"I presume you are English gentlemen?" I answered that we were; whereupon he added—"And Christian men?" Whether this inquiry was made with an eye to baksheesh, I do not know. I suppose it would have conducted to that issue, had I been disposed to mouth stale platitudes on the topic; but, as I was inclined to look upon his accosting us thus in the public street as a gross liberty, I resented it by asking him if he desired to constitute himself our spiritual adviser. This irrepressible person was then good enough to inform us that he was a devoted student of Holy Scripture. The pertinency of this bit of biography I failed to see; so my reply was that, considering we were

utter strangers, we begged to be spared the infliction of such talk, and that a public street was hardly the place in which to conduct a theological controversy. Our firmness was too much for the eminent student of Scripture, who, slapping his coat-pockets ("No baksheesh!" again, observe), exploded into frantic gestures; which necessitated the remark that the ostentatious profession of religion was no criterion of its genuineness, and that, even as a lady habitually wearing diamonds and pearls every day induces suspicion of their value, this sickening cant about religion did not raise the professors of godliness in the estimation of thinking men and women: and, elevating our hats most respectfully, we bowed ourselves away from one of the established nuisances of Beyrout.

By way of agreeable change, let me turn to the American Mission, at the head of which stands Dr. Thompson, a writer of great celebrity on Biblical literature in connection with Syria, and as pleasant and kind a gentleman as one could wish to meet. Most of the members of this body combine D.D. with M.D., and the union of qualifications produces the happiest results. I must refer with unqualified admiration to the College (founded by the liberality of a New York merchant, who contributed the munificent sum of £10,000) for the education of young Syrians for the medical profession, for which several of them have shown great aptitude. All the professors are, without exception, Americans, and speak Arabic fluently. I used frequently to go to it to witness their mode of instruction. Every branch of

medical knowledge is efficiently taught, and all the arrangements are as complete and satisfactory as human ingenuity can make them. Talk of civilisation! These men are the diffusers of its refinements and blessings; and the world is under obligations to them which are not easy of repayment. I am by no means inclined to make invidious distinctions where all merit every commendation; but I must specially refer to Dr. Post, the Professor of Botany, who, besides being the author of several valuable works, has been at the pains of translating, for the benefit of native students, several treatises into Arabic; in connection with which fact I may mention, as an additional example of the helpful resources of the Mission, that these books have been printed at their own printing establishment. In the face of these results, obtained on an income of only £4000 a year, what can we think of windy preachments about religion, and the white satin theory of civilisation maintained at so monstrous a cost, as we have seen above?

Of Dr. Post's medical skill and humanity I had personal experience, when I was suffering from great physical prostration superinduced by an eruption of Syrian boils, which running into each other inflicted excruciating pain.

There are one or two hotels in Beyrout infested with hangers-on who demand baksheesh at every turn you take. With the exception of the French hotel, the owners of these establishments have all been dragomen themselves, who have accumulated large sums at the expense of their

helpless victims, the travellers; and they look with indulgent eyes upon a system endeared to them by early associations.

Meeting my friends the Andrews again, I rode out with them to the Dog River, a distance of five miles, whence a company has been formed to conduct the water into Beyrout. Whether it will answer remains to be seen. Taking advantage of the sands, Mrs. A., an accomplished horsewoman, challenged me to contest a race with her over a given distance for the stake of two guineas, she undertaking to beat me by two lengths, her excellent husband being appointed umpire. I could not refuse to comply with so provoking a challenge, and we went off neck-and-neck for a long way; but to her credit be it recorded that she finally shook me off and carried away the prize even more easily than she conditioned.

Beyrout is the Brighton of Syria, in which there always is a large number of resident European families, and social pretensions, having had time to mature and stiffen into prominence, are therefore, as might have been anticipated, most amusingly developed. To one of a satirically meditative frame of mind nothing could be more instructive than the procession of equipages every evening on the Damascus road. The reader shall have a peep or two thereat.

First there goes the carriage of a man whose dignity is of the most self-appreciating sort. Of mean birth and consequently ill-qualified to deal with gentlemen, his vulgarity was strengthened by domestic service, in early life, with a Russian family, which led to his marrying a

Russian. This served him well for future advancement. During the Russian war interpreters were required for the Army. He was secured and employed as a spy for England; and, as he escaped without being shot, he found his way into the Commissariat department, and ultimately reached the pinnacle of his glory as Consul. It is easy to understand in which direction his sympathies really lie; and at the Consulate, as might be expected, the khavasses are most uncivil; they do not care even to affect the show of politeness.

Then there is the turn-out of the Irish apothecary and his red-haired wife, who rates her position as second only to that of the Consul's "lady." She was the daughter of a pawnbroker in Cork; and a pawnbroker, thanks to the perversity of mankind who are cruelly oblivious of their obligations to him, is not esteemed socially as high as he perhaps deserves to be. Douglas Jerrold, observing on the tacit compact in society to affect ignorance of the existence of the Pawnbroker, has noted that, while men are prone to vaunt the rectitude and the talents of their tradesmen, speaking of "*My* wine-merchant," "*my* boot-maker," even "*my* attorney," no one yet startled the delicacy of company with "*My* pawnbroker;" but he is generous enough to admit that, vulgar and common-place as the pawnbroker is to-day, yet he had "picturesque forefathers." And why should not the daughters, when they get the chance, try to do something in the "picturesque" line where no suspicion prevails of their origin? And, to show that her airs are of the highest class, she positively affects to ignore the existence of an accom-

plished lady, who is first cousin of an English duchess. Such are the startling triumphs of "cheek"!

Then may be seen the wife of a trader in calico, radiant with finery and particularly brave in bonnets; and then come an old Irishwoman or two, painted up to the eyes, and by no means disposed to think "small beer" of themselves, in spite of all the cruel ravages of Time.

These, and others of that ilk, assert a vulgar prominence in Society, and an observer cannot avoid noticing them; but there are not a few families I could name, which preserve the graces, virtues, and accomplishments befitting English homes, in violent contrast with aspiring gentility. There are several gentlemen in Beyrout, too, whose kindness and attention to me under most trying circumstances I could wish to particularise; but I am sure the record would not be agreeable to their modesty.

The natural beauties of Beyrout are not to be exhausted in a day. The scenery is both various and ample; and it was not a little interesting to see the curious Arab houses ensconced within the luxuriant mulberry foliage.

I witnessed the arrival of the new Governor of Syria, whose head-quarters are generally fixed at Damascus. He was the successor of the official whose outrageous behaviour to Captain Burton was the occasion of his removal to Constantinople; and I have no hesitation in pronouncing him to have been the fattest and roundest-shouldered Turk I ever saw. He had a vast harem, as became so gross a creature; and the ladies also partook of the grossness of their lord and master, who evidently

recognised fat as contributing to the complete formation of beauty. Laziness proclaimed itself unmistakably in his countenance. He looked to be exactly the man who could—and would—be lazy with all his might. Such was the extent of his retinue, of his pipe-bearers and his coffee-makers and other ministers to Oriental state and luxury, that local resources in the shape of carriages, carts, horses and mules were taxed to the full—being forcibly enlisted in the service—for their transport to Damascus. It made me shudder to think that this fellow could, if he chose, wield his despotic power without restraint, for from his decisions the natives have no appeal.

There was a famous sun-worshipper here whose achievements in falconry were truly amazing. Within ten days of the capture of a hawk, he rendered the bird perfectly tame, and trained it to the capture of any quantity of quail in a given time. Early in the morning, and late at night, he was to be seen in the company of his birds, one or two of which, newly caught, he always had on his arm, stroking them and addressing them with soothing terms. In fact, he was never away from them. They ate with him, and were subject to the influence of his presence during the whole day; and at night even they were not removed from his observation, roosting as they did above his head. The effect of this continuous and patient discipline of kindness was visible in the reduction to complete submission of these wild birds of prey; off which, during the process, he seldom took his eyes, the orbed lustre of which seemed to subdue their innate ferocity.

The eye I believe to be the chief agent in their taming; and intelligent Arabs will tell you that, either for evil or for good, the eye is far more potent than the tongue, in point of attractiveness. In all their songs, the eye either of man or of woman is the theme of ideal fascination; and this is specially observable in the choruses of Syrian songs. In a conversation I held with this man, he emphasised the popular belief by inquiring of me if I did not know that, when the eagle found the dead body of a man or a camel, it applied itself first to picking out the eyes. The whole animal creation, he maintained, was to be governed by the eye of man.

About a week before leaving Beyrout, I had the opportunity of witnessing a magnificent illumination in honour of the birth-day of the Prophet. Two Turkish men-of-war were in the harbour at the time, and their brightened outlines lent a pleasing variety to the brilliant scene, which was still further intensified by the Lebanon mountains on the opposite side, where every Mahommedan house was lighted up. It was quite a fairy spectacle, which was highly favoured by the night. It began at six in the evening and lasted all night. The illuminations at the Turkish public offices were most gorgeous, and the salvoes of artillery pealing at intervals, their echoes taken up by the mountains, gave one quite an exciting and delightful sensation.

CHAPTER VIII.

ISMAILIA.—SUEZ.

I NOW step on board a little steamer bound for Port Said, to take the Canal for Abyssinia.

On my return to Port Said, which occurred on a Sunday, I was rejoiced to resume my intimacy with my kind friend, Mr. Webster, who had engaged to give me a letter of introduction to the Agents at Suez, with a view to securing my passage through the Red Sea. It was quite refreshing to me to be in his society again; his brightness of mind and cheerfulness of disposition infused new life into me; and the memory of his goodness to me is not likely to be soon effaced. The Post-office boat conveyed me to Ismailia.

ISMAILIA is the loveliest place in Egypt. It is entirely French, it having been the prime object of M. de Lesseps

to lavish all the attention and expense he could upon the place. The creation is five hundred times more marvellous than Mr. Mechi's farm at Tiptree. From an absolute desert it has been converted into a smiling garden, the vegetable productiveness of which is proverbial. Of course these results could not have been obtained but for the forced labour which was to be had without any limit, for bringing in fresh water. Several fine edifices have been erected, together with a magnificent palace for the Viceroy. In the lake opposite Ismalia some very wonderful fish—of various sorts, which come in at both ends of the Canal, from the Red Sea and the Mediterranean—are caught, principally by the Greek fishermen. It has been ascertained that the Red Sea shark has gone through into the Mediterranean, and (*vice versâ*) its Mediterranean cousin into the Red Sea. As soon as sufficient have been caught, an auction takes place, of which only a fourth of the proceeds goes to the fisherman, while the rest is appropriated by the Khedive; and not unfrequently I believe that, when it is an Arab fisherman, the whole is confiscated upon some pretext or another. As an instance of the revenue thus obtained, I may mention that I have known a fish fetch six shillings at Zagazig, and ten shillings at Cairo, the expense of transit being so heavy. A permanent memorial of the Empress Eugenie's visit at the opening of the Canal survives in the chateau built for her reception. Her gracious courtesy and affability of manner to all who were privileged to approach her will long be remembered here; and History will not fail to record that such was her

beauty at the time that it dazzled the eyes even of the cold and indifferent Mahommedan, who termed her "the Angel of Light."

On my arrival at SUEZ, everything seemed a perfect desert; a sense of desolation seemed to oppress me; and it was not until I had tasted of the comforts of the hotel, and made the acquaintance of some young Englishmen in the Telegraph Service, that I felt a relief. And it is but fair to acknowledge that, but for the valuable assistance of Mr. McCullough, who kindly acted as my agent in the matter of procuring provisions for Abyssinia, I should not have found my course quite as free from difficulties as it was rendered by his mastery of the languages and his thorough familiarity with Eastern affairs. I must also commemorate the hearty kindness of Mr. Henry Williams, Engineer-in-chief to the Khedive's Steam Navy.

My abode at the Hotel d'Orient, of which a Frenchwoman was the proprietress, was notable chiefly for the domestic disturbances which may be said to have formed the standing bill of fare. Whatever else was wanting—and not unfrequently a good many things *were* wanting—rows with the servants abounded, and my languor was roused sometimes by the stirring spectacle of the resolute lady in pursuit of a refractory wench with a stout broomstick. On those days I soon came to learn that our chances of getting any dinner were very slender. As an example of the highly philosophic way in which, under such distressing circumstances, we comported ourselves,

I may say that we were fain to get what satisfaction we could from the shade of a bower of some French creeper which stood before the hotel, which of course had a most absurd fountain in the middle of it,—for the French abroad appear to be quite unable to do without fountains of some sort,—and there, *lenti in umbrâ*, we tried very hard to forget our anxieties and privations.

There is a Hospital here under the charge of M. Le Blon, established by the government for the provision of relief to Algerian pilgrims bound to Mecca. They proceed by this route in thousands, and, as no small proportion of them succumb to their painful exertions on the way, the doctor's duties often are very heavy.

A visit to the Dock-yards only impressed me with the conviction that anything might be done anywhere, under even the most unfavourable conditions, with the facility of obtaining labour in Egypt; and I was not disposed to go into raptures over the "enterprise" of the French company in converting that extent of ground into docks, in the presence of that unquestionable fact. As we all know, 92,000 men were always employed in digging the Suez Canal, and every inch of the soil so disturbed was taken away in baskets upon the backs of the poor wretches, who for food were supplied only with Egyptian beans. From their numerous skeletons and skulls, uncovered by the winds of the Desert from their shallow cavities, it is easy to see that they died at their slavery like rotten sheep; and it is notorious that they paid that tribute to civilization on the largest scale. To get this abour, the simple measure was adopted of sending an

armed convoy into the adjacent villages, and seizing indiscriminately all the able-bodied inhabitants. Even the sons of sheikhs were not exempted from the operation of this ruthless rule, unless indeed they purchased their freedom with handsome baksheesh,—which, of course, went *not* into the public treasury, but into the private and most capacious pockets of the officers in command of the impressing forces,—exactly as things are managed in Egypt down to the present day. At the end of their labours, I believe some minute sum was paid to the poor devils; and the historical statement of the case stands somewhat thus:—France had the honour and glory (and all the rest of it) of the transaction; the Egyptians had the misery of forced and cruelly oppressive labour; and M. de Lesseps and the Viceroy had the entire profits. I advance not a syllable against the vast usefulness of the enterprise to England, whose commercial interests it cannot but promote; but, as an achievement of engineering skill, it cannot compete, in my estimation, with the Serra Railway in Brazil, from Santos to San Paulo; where the most perplexing difficulties have been overcome by the genius of my friend, Mr. Fox. M. de Lesseps having achieved what had been pronounced impossible by every engineer in England, *i.e.* having cut the canal through the isthmus of Suez and so united the Red Sea with the Mediterranean, he has of course entitled himself to the distinction of being regarded as one of the foremost marvels of the age; and the lapse of time will only serve to magnify his well earned reputation. It may be interesting to mention that the opera-

tion of filling the great lake in the middle of the Canal took six weeks, during which the greatest anxiety prevailed as to its accomplishment. At the Docks I had the misfortune to witness an accident that befell an Egyptain labourer who was carrying a great tray of weights on his head. His foot slipping, he dropped down a steep embankment and smashed his face and skull fearfully. It made a sad impression on me; but as for the Arab bystanders! They simply rubbed their hands and ejaculated the time-consecrated formula—God is great, and Mahommed is his prophet! This to me was a striking illustration of the devotional frame of mind which quietly takes things as they come as being necessarily all right. Fatalism clearly is not without its compensatory advantages. It may not be a whip to progress; but there is a Stoic patience of evil which is not to be omitted from the calculation. Virtue is passive as well as active; and the eternal fitness of things is vindicated by the spirit of submission in Egypt, where it surely is not surprising that death should be robbed of its terrors, living as the people do perpetually in expectation of the bastinado, and in one unmitigated series of privation. And it is curious to observe how this feeling operates in reduction of the frightful hardships of their existence. I remember an instance of a young man of 19 being most severely bastinadoed, so that he could not sit down. When he complained to his father of the punishment he had suffered, the old man was quite collected, went on smoking his pipe, and at last inquired if it was a Bey or a khimekar who had had him basti-

nadoed. When he learned that it was a Bey, the old man was satisfied. "I feel honoured," said he, "and you, though the pains be great, must not think it a disgrace, seeing that so great a man took the trouble to have you chastised." The young man, upon this, turned round with an admiring gaze at his lower extremities, and seemed to reconcile himself somehow to the conviction, paternally impressed upon his mind, that matters after all were not quite so bad as they looked and felt. But he appeared as though he had sat upon a sharp gridiron.

The population of Suez embraces a large proportion of the worst offscourings of the Levant; but I must not fail to record that there were some of the very best specimens of Englishmen I ever met in the whole course of my travels.

I had now to present myself at the Divan, or Government office, for the purpose of getting my ticket for Abyssinia. Here I saw Mr. West, the English Consul, of whose civility I can speak with pleasure; and I do trust that, at the expiry of his term of office, he will be succeeded by a man who will equally have at heart the interests of British subjects. Subsequently I paid my respects at the Consulate and called upon Mrs. West, who gave me a very kind reception. She was the widow of a schoolmaster in Cairo, whom her second husband served as a pupil-teacher; and Mr. West, who conducted the school for some time after the death of his principal, had the privilege of educating Nuba Pasha, whom I do not regard as reflecting credit on

his tutor, although he taught him to speak English perfectly.

Local society is greatly indebted to the gentlemen belonging to the Telegraph Service for their amateur theatrical exertions, which once a fortnight break the dull uniformity of the place. The "star" actor is Mr. Mitchell, and the value of Mr. Durrant as general manager of these capital entertainments, which really are about the only English form of liveliness in the East, is duly recognised and appreciated. By reason of both adverse winds and strong currents, Suez is most inconvenient for boat exercise; so donkey-riding on the railroad in the cool of the evening is largely patronised. At some little distance over the way "Moses' Wells" are pretty, and there are the graves of one or two Englishmen. This mention of graves reminds me of the disgracefully neglected condition of the old burial ground, situated on a small island opposite to Suez, in which the bodies may be seen positively lying uncovered. Here may be read the names of many a distinguished Englishman who, returning on sick leave from India, died before he reached old England; and their graves bespeak small regard for their departed worth; not that there has been a failure of funds supplied by relatives and friends for the purpose, but they have been improperly administered.

When an English sailor dies here without leaving effects, no service is read over his remains by the Consul; and I have witnessed the sight, disgraceful to the English nation, of sailors in their wretched coffins, without the

Consul, without a single mourner as attendant, flung into their graves by Arab porters; who cannot but be impressed with the conviction that the lives of Englishmen derive their value solely from the possession of money. This hardly accords with the most ordinary notions of decency, and certainly is not calculated to inspire respect for the English character in the minds of the Egyptians. And when one reflects on the services rendered to commerce by brave, hardy Jack Tar, and on the fact that Consuls profit by mercantile activity in every way, this neglect is not only barbarous, as being opposed to bare humanity; it is basely ungrateful; and I do trust that the matter will attract the attention of Her Majesty's Government. Mr. Perceval at Port Said is an honourable exception to this rule of indifference. His ministrations to sick sailors, and his respect for their remains, do him high honour both as an official and as a man; and I must not forget to add that in this noble work he is aided by his excellent wife, who exemplifies her charity by personal attention to the wants of the poor sailors who are left behind at the Port.

Mr. Plimsoll's exertions in their behalf have earned their deepest gratitude; and at the mouth of the Canal blessings are invoked on his name, and hopes are loudly expressed that British Consuls will be taught to act as becomes their station, and that English sailors will be treated as something better than dogs. These things may not be known to the run of travellers, who studiously avoid mixing with complaining people, and who consequently are blissfully ignorant of all that goes on around

them. By those concerned, of course, highly flattering representations are made. For my part, I have never yet known Officialdom admit the suspicion of wrong-doing in any one department of its awfully stately existence; and my readers do not require to be told that so perfect is everything nowadays that, even in England, when an appalling accident occurs on a railway, official investigations generally end in the promulgation of the sentence that no one is to be blamed for it. Much more in Egypt and elsewhere. However rife irregularities may be, they lose their ugly names and, in process of time, come to be regarded as parts of a perfect system of things. I have never allowed myself to be gulled by official accounts. Preferring to use my own eyes, I have always declined to employ Consular or other spectacles, which generally are of the most soothing rose tint; and I should have considered that I was neglecting my duty as an independent traveller, if I did not bring abuses to light as they came under my observation. But enough of this for the present.

The Post Office here is conducted by Maltese, who are as uncivil a set of people as ever afflicted mankind. This is an example * of how England has to provide for these mongrels,—cross breeds between low Italians and Portugese—for cunning unequalled. I was immensely amused by the social pretensions of the head of the department, who lost no time in informing me that he was a gentleman.

* Lord Aberdeen's policy was to give these people precedence over Englishmen in Turkey and Egypt.

This startling bit of family biography reposed on the circumstance that his father had fought a duel with a young English officer; and he gave emphasis to the historical fact that in those days it was only gentlemen who fought duels. I represented that it was a great condescension on the part of the young English officer to fight with his parent; but, adhering to the convention that only with a gentleman could he have done so, my pertinaciously logical Maltese was too much for me on that point. To my inquiry as to what the Englishman did, the Maltese (who, like his race, had no notion of what would be appreciated, or not) replied that the English officer shot up in the air, and that his father shot him through the heart. On this exploit the Maltese boasted of ancestral distinction, tracing it back with the fond pride of those who revert to the Norman Conquest, or of the more mushroom aristocracy who date from the battle of the Boyne. We must not forget, however, that these Maltese have very few opportunities of proclaiming their valour, as my fellow-countrymen in the East, I am proud to say, seldom speak to them, though "General Nuisance" surrounds himself with these abject toadies.

CHAPTER IX.

JEDDA.

I NOW betook myself to the steamer that was to convey me to Abyssinia.

Everybody was kind to me at Suez, and the congenial society of my countrymen made my severance from them a hard parting. I put off in a boat, attended by my dear friend McCullough, and Mr. Zobel, who resolved to see me fairly settled on board; where, as on all Mahommedan ships, there was an entire absence of comfort. All I had of worldly wealth was a few pounds, for money would have been of no value to me at that time; but I prized the possession of a letter of introduction to an excellent Englishman of the name of Currie, whom I afterwards found most useful to me, at Massouah. My travelling *impedimenta* were but few,—saddle-bags and the supply of provisions I had to take upon my journey. There was an English

engineer on the steamer, of the name of Maccordock; but the captain was an old Arab, who had once taken out a Welsh gentleman, his wife and child, on a hunting expedition in Abyssinia. This unfortunate individual was murdered; and his brother having requited the Arab captain, for the marked kindness which he professed to have shown to the family on their way, with a hundred guinea watch, I was tormented by its exhibition. Never before was I aware of the way in which a gold watch might be rendered an engine of social oppression. Evidently I was expected to be influenced by the sight of the handsome memorial, and to make some sort of appreciative demonstration on my own account. But I could not be brought into the proper frame of mind. These Arabs are the most mercenary wretches living. They consider that you should give them everything; and, what is more, if you make them a present, they think you should double its value next time,—in strict accordance with the requirements of Arithmetical Progression. In fact, there is no satisfying them. My trip to Massouah, under these afflicting circumstances, I cannot say was of a very interesting character. I visited the Dhalac light-house, where we stopped for the purpose of delivering provisions for the people engaged in it, who are three in number—an Englishman, a Scotchman, and a Maltese. This was one of the most extraordinary instances of the degree to which the mind of man may be subdued in respect of contentment with the hardships of life. Each one of these poor fellows has three month's leave in the year; and I shall not soon forget the looks of sorrow

with which our departure—a cheerful break in the painful monotony of their existence—was regarded. They bore a peculiar look of despair, which told of the gloom generated by their isolated position, for they have communication with the outer world only once in two months, when they have provisions brought to them.

Here I saw the finest collection of Red Sea shells I ever had the pleasure of inspecting.

A painful sight was the "Van Tromp," the ill-fated Dutch ship which got ashore during her passage to Batavia with a most valuable cargo. She was surrounded by Arab and Maltese boats come up from Suez; and I can safely say that it was one of the most extraordinary things that ever came under my notice in the course of twelve years' travel, to see the perfectly reckless way in which everything was being disposed of. Tins of potted provisions of all sorts, and beautiful English and Dutch butter (which in Suez is retailed at four shillings per pound) were sold at absurd rates, and without any, the least, reason for the sacrifice, seeing that the whole cargo might easily have been transhipped and sold favourably and well, instead of being distributed among the Maltese and the Arabs; two or three of whom realised £2000 each by their speculations. This is a sample of the sort of things that go on in the Red Sea; and the lesson which "Lloyds" have yet to learn is to entrust the conduct of their affairs to firm hands and intelligent heads. Such palpable neglect of the interests of those concerned, and such a lack of business capacity as this incident disclosed, excited the astonishment every Englishman who wit-

nessed it; and the scandal derives aggravation from the circumstance that such things can take place on the highway of the Eastern World. The advice I would take the liberty to offer to "Lloyds" is, to trust no local authority, but to send out cool, calculating men of whom they have had experience at home, for the protection of their interests here, among these most predacious Maltese.

On we steamed to JEDDA, our navigation getting somewhat difficult by reason of Jedda being to the Mahommedan world what Jaffa is to the Christian, in that it is the gateway to Mecca, the birthplace of the Prophet. I landed here, and inspected the ruins occasioned by the celebrated bombardment carried on by the French while the English quietly looked on. The English, it is said, supplied the ammunition (for they had orders not to fire), and the French used their artillery. This operation had a very beneficial effect on the inhabitants of the region. It made the Mahommedan world understand that, though the Prophet was an active power in his own day, Christendom somehow has created appliances easily capable of annihilating their stale edifices. "Very curious," I have observed more than once to Mahommedans of distinction, "it is to speculate on your condition. You are a poor lot; unable to do anything, too lazy even to get your own livelihood. You are unprosperous, and cruel to each other; and your Government, on pain of bastinado, exacts all kinds of harsh demands, while Christendom flourishes without the least pressure being put upon it. Immutably fixed in one groove, you forbid to yourselves the capability of pro-

gress. While on earth, you think of nothing but money, women, and coffee; and your creed teaches you to believe that in Paradise you will be caressed by beautiful women, and enjoy all the delights appertaining to the society of such ravishing beings. This prospect of bliss, indeed, is the summit of your ideal felicity. While Christians reckon a good woman to be a great treasure, and indulge the hope that they shall meet her again in Heaven, *you* hope to meet, not your wife (to whom no place is assigned by you in the future economy), but a vast number of women better than the wife who has shared the cares of life with you on earth; whereas we are perfectly satisfied with dwelling on the renewal of affection for the single partner of our joys and our griefs."

The Bazaar of Jedda is of great extent,—a quaint place which boasts of several really good Arabian houses of many stories and solid architecture.

It may be said to be a continuous succession of cook-shops, and stores for the sale of Manchester cotton goods, and especially of magnificent Persian carpets, of all sizes and patterns, the best to be purchased in Arabia. These find a ready sale, for it is considered the correct thing by all Mahommedans who do the pilgrimage, to buy their prayer-carpets on the road to Mecca; and an equally lively trade is done in the materials for the turbans. One pilgrimage to Mecca entitles the faithful devotee to wear the red turban; the second authorises him to assume the green. In reference to these emblems of distinction a saying prevails among the common people to the effect that one trip to Mecca makes a man respectable; the second invests

him with suspicion; and the third finishes him off as a rogue of the deepest dye. The satire points to the practice of founding a reputation for sanctity on the bare accident of travel; and I rather suspect that Christians are not unapt similarly to regard the operation of church-going as evidence of godliness.

One or two cases of suspected poisoning of Europeans have given Jedda an evil reputation, as being a very unsafe locality to dwell in. Of course we were shewn Mother Eve's tomb, a large, long erection, in which her bones are said to repose;—a representation reminding one forcibly of Dr. Beke's startling discovery of human bones on his new Mount Sinai, which I visited about a month afterwards and found to be, in my judgment, camels' bones, such as are to be met with all over Arabia. As for inscriptions, it was a grievous disappointment to me (and, through me, to my esteemed friend, the Rev. Dunbar Heath) that I never saw one of them. But, as *Punch* wittily inquired in a number I was lucky enough to come across in Arabia, "Who was it that went first?" to which the answer was, "It was the Arab that went before the *beak*;" and we shall do the Arab no injustice in surmising that he destroyed all the inscriptions.

There is a very considerable fishery here, the fish being both good and plentiful; and the negro population, who are slaves, work hard in boats for the transport of pilgrims to the ships. Fine fruit also is to be purchased here; the melons are particularly acceptable. Many of the inhabitants are very wealthy and lead lives of Oriental splendour. Two thousand troops are quartered in the

town, and quite a fleet of Turkish men-of-war rides in the harbour. I have seen as many as eight of them at a time; and the explanation of the circumstance is to be found in the fact that Jedda's geographical position gives it distinctive importance in the Mahommedan mind. During my stay, there was some talk of a railway hence to Mecca. The enterprise, there can be no doubt, would be attended with great profit by reason of the ceaseless stream of pilgrims; but how is the work to be accomplished without European, or Infidel, engineering? No Christian is ever allowed to approach the sacred shrine. The only known instance of one going there is that of the distinguished traveller, Captain Burton, who, having assumed the garb and habits of a Mahommedan, succeeded under the most trying privations in reaching the classic spot. Arabic scholarship enabled him to penetrate where the Infidel never before dared to set foot; and we can easily understand the severity of the general training he must have undergone to be able to execute that feat of sublime audacity, attended as it was at every step with risk of his life; and let us not forget that his assumption of the status of an Oriental subject once or twice exposed him to the peril of the bastinado. Surely no words can be too strong to express our admiration of the intellect, energy, and pluck involved in that undertaking.

CHAPTER X.

ABYSSINIA.

SAWAKIM.

SAWAKIM was reached in three days after our departure from Jedda. As we neared the land, a tremendous sand-storm set in, which compelled us to anchor the steamer. Sand-storms are not uncommon hereabouts. With the prevalence of a high wind the sand nearly blinded us, while all around was enveloped in a darkness of unnatural gloom. It was the occasion of great anxiety to the captain, as the numerous coral reefs rendered navigation dangerous. Twenty years ago execution was the penalty exacted from the Egyptian captain who lost his vessel. Now I believe the punishment is transportation to the White Nile, the Siberia of Egypt; where swollen stomachs and pestilential fevers soon release them from their misery. "A trip to the White Nile" has come to be regarded as a polite synonym for the "bourne whence

no traveller returns." When a Pasha is sent up, by a curious refinement of cruelty a camel of violently jolty paces is selected for him to ride; and it generally shakes him to death before he reaches his destination.

Sawakim is difficult of access; it is a plain, unhealthy-looking spot. On our arrival we learned that Sir Samuel Baker was within fourteen days of the place with a large convoy of camels and ivory. The governor was busily engaged in making a bath for the immediate accommodation of Lady Baker, in the courtyard of his residence, round which a garden was also being laid out. The fresh water for the bath was being brought from a great distance in goat-skins on the backs of Arabs.

The houses were of the usual Arab style, and offered nothing special for observation. I was struck, however, with the singular effect produced by the superimposition of the figure-head of a ship on the top of one of the edifices; and, as Arabs do not usually allow the exhibition of the image of man or beast, this departure from the rule had a startling individuality of its own. Crossing over in a boat to another division of the town, I saw the native blacks, in large numbers, cooking meat on charcoal fires. With the paunch of the animal they are cooking drawn over the right hand like a glove, they sit in rows on the ground before their fires, and turn the meat as required. In another corner over the way I saw Ethiopian natives engrossed in the greasy occupation of buttering one another's heads. The butter, I suppose to facilitate this

"Grateful toil of toilette decoration,"

is generally made into balls; and I am certain I have seen a pound of it rubbed into one man's head. They consider that it imparts strength to the system, besides being a sign of exquisite dandyism. How shocking all this grease must both look and smell! exclaims my reader. Well, I cannot say that I was captivated with the oleaginous lustre of the buttered heads; but, allowing for excess of the article and the absence of disguising essences, it is not much worse than what I have sometimes witnessed among ourselves; only our head-baptism is effected with some less material substance than butter. Still, *mutato nomine*, it is only butter, after all the confusions of chemistry. The process of being buttered, I must be careful to note, has the additional attraction of the company of the ladies, who sit on both sides of the man undergoing the operation, and occupy the time with flattering comments on his increased and increasing comeliness until the due quantity of butter has been got through.

Besides this Truefitt-provoking practice, they have several curious modes of dressing the hair; and such is the fame of the local *artistes* that they attract customers from distant parts in the interior. These are rather a fine race of men, whereas the inhabitants of the town itself are a very peculiar people, a half-starved, fish-eating community; whose huts consist of sticks set in the earth and covered in with matting. Fragile as they may be, however, these mat houses are very agreeable, being exactly adapted to the climate.

The fishermen go out on rafts bound together with

bullock's hide, which they navigate with paddles. As I have already intimated, a very considerable industry is in operation with fish; of which there are numerous varieties. As a rule, the flavour of the Red Sea fish is not good; but I must make an exception in favour of a beautiful little fish, very plentiful here, about the size of our sprat and with somewhat of the flavour of the smelt. Another fish, to be found all along the coast in great numbers by reason of being religiously avoided, is known by the name of the Excrement fish from its attending upon ships. It has a handsome look, like that of a large carp.

Here are two or three varieties of the sand-piper, and both storks and pelicans abound. As a curiosity of Natural History, I must note that I saw here two of the thinnest living kittens I ever set eyes on. Their skin, destitute of hair, actually looked like silk drawn over a frame of bones. This was the effect of extreme starvation. Their owners never think of feeding animals, and they are averse from destroying life; so the dire struggle for existence is suffered to continue as it best can.

The Governor was exceedingly polite to me, and I presented him with the "Illustrated London News" and other newspapers, which he said he should place at the disposal of Sir Samuel Baker, in the event of his coming down. On one occasion, while I was seated with him, in came an eunuch, who had been the head official in the Harem of the late Viceroy. The duty of the successor always is to have this depositary of so many State secrets

either executed, or removed from the place; hence he was sent here, where he held a considerable position. On his entry into the room I observed that the Bey rose from his seat, and received him with every sign of cordiality and respect. It was known that he held close communication with many influential personages in Cairo; and this circumstance rendered it highly desirable to keep on good terms with him. This creature was very thin, and had a painfully squeaky voice; and I could not help surveying him with peculiar interest. The meal which was soon served up, I presume in honour of both of us, consisted of turkeys stuffed with raisins; and it certainly was amusing, though ill accordant with the English mode, to see him applying his long, bony fingers to the tearing asunder of the body of a bird; after which he deferentially presented me with a leg and some stuffing. It happened that I was not familiar with the dish, and at first I fancied that the cook had forgotten to take the crop out of the bird, and so had left in the beans with which poultry are fed in Egypt. He observed my hesitation and surprise at the novelty; and, by way of resolving my doubts, he carefully detached a raisin from its unctuous embedment and coaxingly insinuated it into my mouth. This mark of delicate attention was not lost upon me. The proverbial cleanliness of these men reconciled me at once to the digital conveyance of my portion of the fare; and I could not but relish it when he assured me that it was a favourite dish with the ladies of the Harem in Egypt. The late Viceroy, he told us, most carefully attended to the feeding of the ladies, whom he visited

only after they had been royally entertained. With Shakespeare he evidently held that

> "The veins unfilled, our blood is cold—and then
> We pout upon the morning; are unapt
> To give or to forgive: but, when we have stuffed
> These pipes and these conveyances of our blood
> With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
> Than in our priest-like fasts."

A multitude of hungry women obviously would be a most annoying form of opposition to one who counted upon luxurious ease and stately dalliance in their society; and, in seeing to the physical condition of his ladies, the late Viceroy was simply providing for his own comfort.

This eunuch was a very pleasant and agreeable companion, quite a man-of-the-world, with large experience of life in all its strange varieties. I remember that the company laughed heartily at the idea of Lady Baker accompanying her husband on his expedition. They explained this (as they took it) irregularity by saying she was not an Englishwoman, and were curious to know why Sir Samuel had not taken an Englishwoman for wife. They also inquired of me if it were true that, in early life, he had been a slave-driver in the West Indies. I said all I knew of Sir Samuel was that he had acted as dragoman to the Prince of Wales up the Nile, and that his instructive tongue had secured to him the Royal favour. Then the conversation reverted to Lady Baker. They affirmed that she was an Austrian; and the difficulty

which they persisted in casting up before me was this:—"If he one English gentleman, why he not marry one English lady?" The Arabs full well know the value of the Peerage and Baronetage. In fact, they are more familiar with the family histories of English lords and ladies than with those of their own Pashas. Burke turns up in many places in the East; and the eunuch, who had himself moved in high and elegant society, was quite up to the mark in respect of what the newspapers call "Court and Fashion."

The general impression here seemed to be that what Sir Samuel Baker had done had been achieved before him by Grant; and Captain Burton was held in the highest estimation as a traveller of unique distinction. They sneered at the notion of preventing Slavery, and remitted Sir Samuel's capture of a slave-dealer to the region of myths. Certainly I could not hear of his having done anything of the kind; and I am prepared to say, from the opportunities of observation enjoyed by me in the course of about five hundred miles' travel in the interior of Abyssinia, that Slavery was as rife as ever. I saw myself a convoy of slaves, 150 in number, being brought down to the coast either for work or for exportation; and, as an Englishman, I must express my surprise at the assertions hazarded respecting the abolition of the hateful traffic.

As always will be the case wherever Mahommedan power rules supreme, there is no limit to the cruelties inflicted on the poor creatures. The religion, in short, inculcates selfishness to the extreme of effacing all con-

sideration for others. Thus, when a man rises to the dignity of a Pasha from a humble station in life, he utterly ignores the existence of his old friends. And so all the way through. A slave may be allowed to enter a place of worship, and pray with the Viceroy himself; this may be interpreted as a recognition of the equality of mankind before God; yet, when prayer is over, he is regarded with as much concern as a locust or a grasshopper. The only care bestowed upon him is to see that he is duly bastinadoed if he does not work. The severity of Egyptian despotism in this region is quite equal to that of the Portuguese in the Quissama country in Central Africa, where I spent a year and a half. It is a very curious thing, indeed, that the information possessed by the British Government regarding Slavery should be of so defective and weak a character; and, as a traveller, I am at a loss to determine the precise measure of Sir Samuel Baker's services to the cause of civilisation in opening up the country, unless England resolves to demand the emancipation of these slaves.

Sir Samuel Baker, it is well known, seized ivory from the natives in the name of the Viceroy. Surely there could be no justice in the abreption, and the people must have derived strange conceptions from the action of our representative. As for the pretext that our national prestige was forwarded by such conduct, it is too ridiculous to be worthy of refutation; and I can only say that, if that conduct be right, the Viceroy might as well

authorise a Pasha to come over here and possess himself of all the valuables contained in London and Ryder's establishment. The invasion of the rights of property absolutely would be of parallel enormity. The time will arrive, and that soon, when England will awake to the consciousness of the signal error she has committed in entrusting so cruel a despot as the Viceroy with the possession of these far removed regions, whence authentic representations of the misery and distress occasioned by his rule will not reach our shores in this century. There can be no doubt that the back country offers vast and important fields for enterprise of all kinds; but what enterprise can be expected to thrive under the domination of Moslem notions, without the regulation of the European mind? Colonel Gordon, who has recently gone out to travel over these countries, will assuredly execute his mission. He is as brave as a lion, and remarkably intelligent; but we must not forget that a soldier is neither a good farmer nor a financial agent.

The world is agreed that Slavery must be put a stop to; and, if it is to be extirpated from these lands, their government must be taken out of the hands of the Viceroy. There can be no middle course.

As an example of what he has already done in the way of spoliation of the natives to satisfy his monstrous demands of taxes, it is sufficient to mention that, if an Abyssinian possesses ten bullocks or cows, six out of the ten are seized, slaughtered, and skinned; and their hides

forwarded to Suez, where, at wholesale rates, they easily fetch a napoleon apiece. This is an unfailing source of ready money, to be sure; but how long can any source be equal to the drains so ceaselessly and recklessly made upon it? All over Egypt signs abound of the people breaking helplessly under the crushing weight of the burdens imposed upon them so long; and the strain must result in their total destruction. In Egypt he has levied taxes in advance up to 1879; and this pitiless anticipation of revenue has been attended with wide-spread ruin, in thousands of cases the last bullock having been carried off. In one part of Egypt I saw the cattle seized in such numbers that they became quite a drug in the market and, failing their sale, had to be returned to their owners, who were duly bastinadoed for the nullity of the commercial speculation. With such a notorious condition of things under the rule of the Viceroy, what security there can be in investing in "New Egyptian Loans," is more than my limited understanding is able to make out.

I spent a couple of days in exploring Sawakim, during which ample material for philosophic reflection was provided by the vast waste of machinery that had been set up for cotton-cleaning and other purposes; I say waste, because, after the erection of the costly apparatus, no money was forthcoming to grow the cotton.

By way of recompensing the old Bey for his kind hospitality, I did not fail to gratify him and his nume-

rous friends with a jig and one or two Irish comic songs. I justify my adoption of the jig in preference to a more stately dance by the plea that solemn movements make no impression on the Oriental mind; and, as the Arab has an unalterable conviction that an Englishman is never sober, it does not much matter how much life you throw into the performance. I therefore allowed myself no little latitude in the execution of my jig, which, in that it disdained regularity of measure, would have won the warm approval of the Mulligan who cut such a terrible figure at "Mrs. Perkins' Ball," as delineated by the charming pen and pencil of the inimitable "M. A. Titmarsh." Loud and long was the laughter I provoked. It is not often that the Arab laughs; he is dull and unhopeful by stress of his fatalistic creed: but he seems to make up for it when he does set about it. Yielding to the influence of mirth, on these rare occasions he may be said to laugh and grin all over; the whole nature of the man is penetrated with a delirium of joy.

The conversation turning upon our mode of government, they seemed to be unable to understand it at all, and rather inclined to the belief that England was fast declining. They were puzzled to account for the fact that a woman reigned; and I was earnestly invited to explain the *rationale* of the (to them) singular arrangement. I said there was an old saw in England that, when woman reigns, men rule, and that, when men reign, woman rules. An Arab of a severely logical turn of mind forthwith made what is called a practical applica-

tion of my remark. "Then," said he, "that's why the Viceroy makes such an ass of himself. The inmates of the Harem, so that they continue to get supplied with jewels and have their friends put into office, are perfectly satisfied; and their satisfaction is all the Viceroy cares about."

This comment was based on the fact that, like all Orientals after five-and-forty years of age, the Viceroy has become very lazy, and has entrusted the conduct of affairs to his son, Towka Pasha, who is a very voluptuous young gent, much given to cultivating female society. Nature has not endowed him with any personal attractions; very far from it; and moreover, according to Mahommedan law, he is not the heir to the throne, the Viceroy's next brother being entitled to the succession. I was thoroughly disgusted, on a previous occasion, to see the brother of a Lord riding beside his carriage and publicly paying him all the homage one would expect to see rendered by a footman to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. It was a sickening sight, and evoked expressions of intense loathing from all European observers.

No other European would, I am sure, have been guilty of the humiliation. But it was reported that Mr. —— had sold several horses to the Viceroy at extravagant prices; hence perhaps the immoderate expression of his attentions.

Sawakim, it should be added, has an active local industry in connection with spear-heads, of which they

manufacture a prodigious number, the inhabitants being accustomed to walk about with spears in their hands. This they do habitually, to the production of a proud, martial style of walking. The place is full of blacksmiths and tinsmiths busy at work of every kind.

CHAPTER XI.

MASSOUAH.—ORET.—MASHALLAT.

LEAVING Sawakim, we passed one or two tiny islands of sand, denoting the proximity of coral reefs, on which sea-birds disported in large numbers; and after three days' good steaming we sighted MASSOUAH.

The surrounding scenery was of a melancholy character, invested with the gloom proverbially inseparable from all Mahommedan towns situated on the Red Sea; without a trace of vegetable life, and entirely bare of the enlivening presence of trees. A small fleet of Arab vessels ply between this and Aden, whence they import Indian fabrics for the Arab merchants and the Banyans; the latter of whom emigrated from India for permanent settlement here. A whole street is monopolised by these industrious people, who are imbued with the mercantile spirit. They carry on a rich trade in ivory and

pearls; and it is notorious they are fairer in their dealings than their Arab competitors.

A notable object of course is the residence of the Governor of the place, Munzinger Pasha, whose rule may be regarded as almost absolute. Of the few European residents I may individualise M. Perrout, who in early manhood came across Grant on the White Nile. He is a wonderfully energetic Swiss gentleman, of kind heart and agreeable manners, and speaks English fluently.

On my first visit to the Governor's house I was not lucky enough to obtain the desired interview. It is nothing but right that there should be proper recognition of the powers that be in every quarter of the globe, and I put in an early appearance for the purpose of respectful salutation, as it behoves travellers most especially to do. But one of the attendants, inclining his head to one side and applying his hand as if to support it, ingeniously signified to me that his master was asleep. This disappointment may seem a trivial one; yet under the circumstances it acquired a certain gravity of its own; for nothing remained but for me to return to my wretched abode, to which, by way of making its likeness to a lock-up still more pronounced than its architectural features rendered it, I was conducted by a nondescript of a policeman. For refreshment of the inner man all I could procure was some Abyssinian bread, which I must candidly confess my utter inability to describe. It would tax the ingenuity of defamation itself to condemn it in sufficiently maledictory terms. It was indeed "fearfully and wonderfully made;" and I have no hesita-

tion in pronouncing it to have been the very worst material in the shape of human food that I ever set teeth to. Yet I had perforce to content myself with it as I best could, consoling myself with the reflection that I was thereby adding to the list of experimental philosophers distributed all over the world, who daily strive to convince their too luxurious fellow-creatures that life may be sustained on the poorest and most unappetising fare. If the Roman satirist successfully assailed the foolishness of people who supplicated for physical health and longevity, by pointing to the *grandes patinæ tucceta que crassa* which clogged the gracious purposes of Jupiter, assuredly he would have given the weight of his Stoic recommendation to Abyssinian bread as singularly wholesome. For a whole week I subsisted on this, and became somewhat impatient at not yet seeing the Pasha, when an intimation was conveyed to me that Munzinger desired to see me. This was news to me indeed. Munzinger, said I to myself, has woke up at last; he has actually come to the consciousness that a traveller seeks introduction to his sublime presence. The sleep which I was not allowed to disturb last week has come to an end; and Munzinger, like Tony Lumpkin, exclaimed I in a transport of delight, is his "own man again." So I hurried to the divan, which in Egypt serves all the ends a room can be put to, and awaited the audience. I soon learned that the somnolency naturally to be expected after the late Rip Van Winkleish spell had not been completely subdued; and, as there were no signs of the Pasha's appearance for a pretty considerable space of

time, I thought to make myself at home by yielding to the attractions of a very comfortable seat which seemed to invite occupation. I was told afterwards that it was reckoned distinguished to keep one waiting as long as possible; and, as my detention was for over two hours, I did not reproach myself with being too forward in consulting my own ease in taking it. But I was not long in possession of it before Hassan, with every sign of concern on his countenance, came in and ordered me out of it, with the intimation that it was the Pasha's seat.

I have done this official a social injustice in speaking of him bluntly as Hassan. He luxuriates in the polite style and designation of Monsieur Hassan. He had been chief of the Austrian police, and had resided at Constantinople, where his career was not successful; and he loves to indulge in the mental luxury of retailing choice episodes of his experience while in that service. He was married to a black woman, whom his lively imagination necessarily invested with the dignified status of an Abyssinian princess. His impertinence was redeemed from mere vulgarity by its sublimity; it beat everything in that line I have ever had experience of, and my experience has not been a limited one. He was most anxious to accommodate me with one of his own servants on my journey into the interior, and the offer was made with all the circumstantiality of profound regard for the traveller's benefit; but it did not require extraordinary penetration to discover that his anxiety was directed to the object of having a spy on my actions, and I therefore declined to accept the proffered kindness, much to his discomfiture.

He is now, I hear, applying his versatile genius to the manufacture of bricks at Keren; and there, for the sake of travellers in general, I fervently trust he may remain.

After the lapse of two hours I was ushered into the presence of Munzinger, whose reception of me was of unimpeachable civility; and, in the usual Oriental style, combining falsehood with pomposity, he assured me that he had just been apprised of my presence in the divan; and Monsieur Hassan had to endure the unmerited reproach of neglect of duty. This transparent lie I was in no humour to take thankfully, and my displeasure at the gross want of courtesy displayed to me was, I fancy, visible enough to his practised eye; so there was quite an effusion of soothing small talk, which culminated in the liberal offer to supply me with a guide to the interior of the country. Now, I am not ungrateful, but I think it admits of question whether this favour was dictated by any love and affection for either me or the English nation. I could not help connecting it with the untimely fate of the Revd. Mr. O'Donnell who had died there, a few days before my arrival, of sunstroke. Various sinister reports had got into circulation regarding his death, which was looked upon as most mysterious; and Munzinger obviously desired to supply no further occasion for malicious gossip.

No time was lost in allotting a guide to me, but a very peremptory message was sent that I should not start for a week. What this meant I could not understand. There might have been some weighty State reason for the detention; or it might only have been one of those incom-

prehensible dark manœuvres so dear to the Arab mind. But, howsoever that might have been, I was forced to remain inactive for the prescribed period, which to me was one of weariness, anxiety and privation. I used to take walking exercise regularly, and was narrowly watched the while, I am confident. On one of these occasions I saw a large concourse of people, evidently on the look-out for a sight of some sort; which turned out to be the Pasha and the son of his wife by a previous marriage with an Abyssinian (which she was herself) riding out on donkeys, attended by the black body-guard, who are very fine troops indeed—slaves confiscated to the use of the Viceroy from slave-owners who had made default in payment of the endless taxes. Having once been fired at and severely wounded, Munzinger never trusts his person in public without these attendants. Upon the whole, I incline to think that he is one of the best Pashas in the Egyptian service; in fact, I am disposed to rate him as ranking next to M'Killop Pasha, who is an Englishman, and who may be said to stand apart from the whole official host. Ever ready to stick up for the rights of Englishmen in Egypt, he is the only man under the Viceroy who does not labour under the suspicion of corruption.

At the end of my week of confinement, in the dead of the night I was roused from my slumbers, and informed that the donkeys were ready and that I must set out without a moment's delay. I needed but little persuasion to get up from my rude bed, for I was restless with anxiety, and the mosquitoes added their irritating torture

to my mental disquiet. It was a very warm night, too; and no sooner had I crammed my things into my saddle-bags than the Arab who woke me hurried me off to the court-yard of the Pasha. Here, by the light of a little oil-lamp, I saw one of the leanest of donkeys appointed to the conveyance of my 16 stone weight, and the hateful speculation shot across my brain that I was far better qualified to carry the donkey. Munzinger, having been asleep all day (which is not an unwise proceeding in hot places like this), was awake at night; and, desiring me to mount my animal, he soon mounted another which was ready for him, and escorted me out of the town. I have omitted earlier to mention, in illustration of the various capabilities of the natives, that Munzinger has a band of twenty-four black musicians, who were trained by an Italian bandmaster imported from Cairo, who unhappily fell a victim to the unhealthy climate. Their playing, which is marvellously good, attests the skill and diligence of their accomplished instructor. As we sallied out of the court-yard, both to my surprise and to my amusement, they suddenly struck up "Yankee Doodle." They all here would have it that I was an American; and the compliment to my supposed nationality certainly was overpowering in its suddenness. They were pleased to think that I was far too cool and impudent (such is the fallibility of human judgment as to character!) for an Englishman; and I was not anxious to disabuse their minds of the erroneous impression, for the Stars and Stripes secure a degree of respect and attention hardly accorded to another flag; and their subjects, nay, even

those of any other nationality claiming their protection, could not incur the chance of maltreatment, however insignificant, without the immediate provision of redress and satisfaction. The proud boast *Civis Romanus sum!* seems now to be the property of the American citizen.

On quitting Massouah we had to pass through a toll-gate, at which each passenger has to pay two piastres (about 4*d.* of English money), and found all the guards fast asleep. These careless custodiers of revenue were forthwith enlivened to a due sense of their responsibilities by the administration of sundry blows, not of the gentlest order, by the members of the Pasha's troop in attendance. Here is the commencement of the watercourse which brings the water into Massouah from a distance of twenty miles. It is a most ingenious contrivance and in every respect reflects the highest credit on Munzinger, who acted as his own engineer. It goes from Massouah across an inland bend of the sea, over to an island, whence it joins the mainland again. The water is remarkably good; and it is a well-known fact that, before this supply was provided, the people in Massouah perished in large numbers for the lack of it, the water then being not only of indifferent quality but very expensive; and the poor wretches would besiege the steamers that arrived at the port with piteous appeals for this indispensable necessary of life. Justice compels me to say—and it is the only good thing I will say for him—that the Viceroy has been at great pains to supply water to his poor subjects scattered over various deserts in his wide dominions; and I should be sorry to detract from his merits in that

regard as a humane ruler by suggesting that, after all, the apparent humanity was bottomed upon selfish concern for his own advantage, since people could not be expected to endure in the absence of water; and the payment of taxes, taxes, taxes, for which people must live, seems to be the chief function of man on earth, in the philosophy of His Highness the Viceroy of Egypt.

The night being dark, we had no means of exactly determining our progress; and, almost before we were aware of it, we came upon a camp of Egyptian troops. The guards saluted us with "God is great, and Mahommed is his prophet," to which succeeded the proclamation, theologically impressive, of "There is but one God, and Mahommed is his prophet." In the melancholy quiet of tropical Africa, in the dead of night, all this sounded very singular.

Arabic prevails all through this region.

We continued our ride till we reached a village, when the Pasha directed his sable Major to knock up the old sheikh and order him to provide me with a horse, for it was distressingly easy to see that my poor debilitated donkey was quite unequal to the support of his burden much longer. The old fellow, on learning that the Pasha was nigh, ran precipitately out of his hut (which, by the way, was a very magnificent affair with its court-yard all matted up) and, as it were in the extremity of terror at the apparition, threw himself flat on his face; after which, having first kissed the ground,—on which I presume he fondly took it for granted that Munzinger had trodden,—he proceeded to imprint kisses on the Pasha's feet. Nor

was his devotion only of the demonstrative sort. A horse soon was brought out, and we closed with his offer to supply another. Coffee also was served; and, as the intelligence of our arrival spread through the village, all the female members of the community, waking up in their huts, began saluting the Pasha with the peculiar guttural noises wherewith they are wont to signify their loyal admiration of their rulers, or the great men of the district, when they pass through. These throat-notes emitted by three or four hundred women in concert, and prolonged for no little space of time, must have taxed the energies of the authors of this unique ovation. It hardly seemed to me to be a mode calculated for the production of any great enthusiasm. On me, indeed, apart from the shock of novelty, it had rather a depressing effect; yet (such is the diversity of taste!) they appeared to derive some sort of moral satisfaction from the performance; which, singular to relate, is left to the women, the men taking no part in it. It certainly is an original way of developing the usefulness of the other sex. What a grand sphere of utility lies open to those aggressive ladies who pine for the enlargement of their bounds! Suppose that they relieved mankind of the hooraying which British institutions stand in such vital need of! And yet that would not do; for how else could Britons discharge their fierce joy-laden souls of the tempest of feeling and sentiment which a grand dinner generates, or the sight of their darling M.P., whose speech they cannot hear and, if they could hear it, they certainly would not understand? This is a consideration that affects our social and

political well-being. Cheers, and shouts, and all the other explosive forces of human nature are not lightly to be suppressed. They have become integral parts of the British Constitution; they are entwined with the very fibre of our national life; and John Bull, for his very salvation, cannot afford to part with the privilege.

Availing ourselves of the change of animal conveyance which the loyal promptitude of the old sheikh had secured for us, we proceeded on our journey, the Pasha giving me the benefit of his society as far as Keren, which we reached in six days. He paid me the gratifying compliment of observing that, the more he saw of me, the better he liked me; and he appeared to take deep interest in learning how things were going on in England. Our progress was not stayed until just before sunrise, when we halted on a very stony plateau, where the soldiers threw down carpets for the Pasha, of which I was courteously invited to avail myself; and right glad was I of the accommodation and of a drink of water, which the warmth of the temperature made most agreeable. A fire now was soon lighted, a tin of sardines opened, coffee of course prepared, and a few hard rusks subdued to the requisite softness by immersion in boiling water. After this early refreshment, the Pasha proposed that we should go on for two or three hours more, before the sun's rays became oppressive, and, resting during the day, resume travel at night; which was a highly sensible and a pleasant idea to boot. Already, indeed, the heat was asserting itself intensely, and the small acacia scrub we passed was being gradually burnt up. Several gazelles

came within our observation on the plain, as we proceeded to achieve our purpose of getting over a certain distance; and we finally sought the shelter of a clay formation at foot of which was a waterpool, the contents of which were as muddy as mud could be, but which we were compelled to drink at the cost of finding the liquid sediment lie cold and heavy in the stomach.

Shortly after we had taken up our quarters for the day, three Arabian Bedouins (a quaint mixture of the Arabian coast tribe and the trading Arab), apprised somehow of our presence, brought us a fine antelope they had slain. Our attendants skinned the animal as quick as lightning, and it was a perfect god-send to me. It was the first bit of fresh meat I had tasted since leaving Jedda, which was three weeks back; the reader will, therefore, be in a position to realise in imagination the gust (to give it no more material name) with which I applied myself to its consumption.

The weather now became oppressively hot, and, in the absence of any shade to be got, it told severely upon my system. A lesser evil, though attended with not a little discomfort and even pain, was that in a few days the skin began to peel off my face. I tried to get what relief I could by having the muddy water poured over my body by the niggers. There was a solidity about this performance which hardly consorts with ordinary notions about bathing; the operation, far from executing the function of cleansing the body, rather contributed to the deposit of dirt; yet, under the circumstances, there was a coarse physical delight in it. At any rate, it helped for a while

to make me cool. It was just the sort of weather and condition of life to develop all the fund of Mark Tapley-ism that might be latent in the soul of a man; and I was thankful for the negative advantage that we were not pestered with flies, or run over by rats when we lay down, as my experience was of Massouah, both by day and by night. I ran a serious risk, however, of being prostrated by the sunstroke, and no medical aid was within reach of us; which did not serve to enliven the prospect.

Starting again at sundown, we continued to travel all night, buoyed with the hope that we should get to a mountain, or a hillock, in the middle of the desert by six o'clock the next morning, though it would require smart travelling to do it. The stillness of our transit was unbroken, save by the howls of the jackal or the hyæna, which proclaimed that they were not far off; and, as Munzinger Pasha and myself kept up a continuous conversation on various topics (for he was decidedly of an inquiring turn of mind), the night sped pleasantly away. Many of the soldiers accompanying us having been post-carriers, we had the advantage of knowing exactly where we were, on our way, at any time, and their experience justified the confidence we reposed in them. At sunrise we came up to a cairn, to which every soldier contributed a stone as he went by it. This struck me as being altogether unlike anything I had ever seen among the Arabs. Their practice is to visit their dead on the first day after Ramadan, when they take cakes and other delicacies to be consumed beside the grave of their departed friends; and it is somewhat difficult to reconcile

this exhibition of devotion to the memory of the departed with the small affection generally evinced for them in life, for with the exception of the great deference paid to parents, and of the compulsory support of the mother, whether rich or poor, their social relations are not marked by any warmth of feeling.

About seven, an hour after we had expected to arrive at the point, we reached a round mountain, where we gladly dismounted, and, carpets being laid down for us, partook of coffee. This was by way of refresher, or whet to the appetite, for in a short time a bullock was either bought or seized (I don't know which, since, when the Pasha travels, the country may be said to belong to him), and forthwith slaughtered, to the supreme delight of the black soldiers, whose blood-shot eyes literally danced with delight at the prospect of obtaining what to them was an unheard of luxury at Massouah. But for this ocular excitement, they betrayed no agitation; and it is a curious fact that, whatever may be the treat you offer these people after they become Mahommedans, they accept the favour with the repose of well-bred indifference.

Considerably set up by the rest and sleep we got here, in the evening we started afresh in this very hot district, and arrived at a place called, I think, ORET. Here was a running stream, admirably calculated to gladden the parched traveller's heart, and our horses plunged into it with evident satisfaction. Both men and beasts indeed enjoyed the welcome provision of Nature; and our course now ran through rushes and rank tropical river growth. Soon we caught sight, in the distance, of about

twenty huts, shaped like English wheat-stacks. As we made for the small settlement, out came about a hundred black fellows, who were quick at discerning the importance of the travellers. They saluted the Pasha with profound respect. The principal hut was speedily cleared out for our reception, and couches improvised for us by bullock's hide being stretched out and strapped on to four wooden legs,—which was an excellent contrivance for ministering to our ease and comfort. Propping up my back with my saddle-bags, I got all the luxurious sensation of reclining on a stately sofa. After a delightful bathe in the river, which revived me after the exhaustion of a heavy day's journey, the coffee acquired increased virtue; and, when I add that another bullock was killed (I really believe this liberal consumption of beef warrants the suspicion that we did not pay our way through the territory!), I began to think I could make myself very contented and happy here for a week. It was such a change from the gloomy sterility of the desert that it renovated me at once. Here I saw the bustard in great numbers. They are the favourite food of the Arabs, who, as a rule, neglect all sustenance of this sort. One we killed was very delicious; it had the rich flavour of the wild turkey.

A wealthy Abyssinian chief, or one of a tribe between the Abyssinian proper and the Desert Arab, came down to pay his respects to the Pasha, bringing with him a supply of sour milk and two fat young cows. After a prolonged interview, during which he sedulously retailed all the gossip respecting the various chiefs, he retired;

and I was glad to fall asleep, leaving Munzinger to attend to State ceremonials as long as to him seemed fit.

The great feature of this place was the abundance of fresh water, and much might easily be achieved in the way of cultivating the soil, if only the requisite energy were applied to it. I was surprised to observe that the native troops did not seem to miss vegetable fare; evidently they were perfectly satisfied with the wretched Abyssinian bread and rice. The people are far from being industrious, and it certainly is to be deeply regretted that they are not made to apply themselves to agriculture. But it were vain to expect that anything can be made out of the Egyptians without the element of active European supervision. To the inquiry why they don't do this or that thing the stereotyped answer is that "God is great, and Mahommed is his prophet!" It has never been done before, they will reason with you; and why should we be asked to do it?

Our ride the next morning conducted us pleasantly between lofty mountains through a ravine frequently intersected with streams of water; and I retain a lively memory of a brief interval of rest beneath the cool shade of an enormous tree, which sheltered a large number of goats, the property of their peasant proprietors. The scenery was still very lovely, with the variety of mountain forms, and we were regaled with the several melancholy cooings of numerous Abyssinian doves, of which there are many beautiful varieties; in fact, as each succeeding day separated us still further from the desert, bird life became more frequent.

Our next point of arrival was MASHALLAT, where there is a convict depôt. About four hundred Egyptians are imprisoned here. Some of these rascals had faces of the vilest character I ever encountered, and I would gladly have given anything I had to secure a few skulls for my friends of the Anthropological Society. Many, or, rather, most of them were sentenced for the perpetration of outrageous crimes. They were, what they looked, demons in human shape, capable of any atrocity, and they were being served after the fashion of demons.

They were in a long shed thatched with rushes, and open before and behind, and the filthy condition of the place speedily revealed itself to our nostrils as we approached. Several of them were in chains; but the outposts were so numerous around that there was no possible chance of escape. Our arrival at the settlement created a great sensation. One case of hardship impressed my mind with an abiding sense of its severity. To avoid the military conscription, the young man, who could speak English, had left his native village in Egypt and fled to Liverpool. When he failed to put in appearance at the time required by the law of Egypt, the authorities seized and confined both his parents; and they were detained in custody until intelligence of the parental troubles induced him to return. His return, however, did not serve to release him from the penal obligation of his desertion, which is reckoned a great crime; and accordingly he was transported to Abyssinia for the term of his natural life. The labour on which he was engaged together with his associates was the cutting a

passage through the mountain with crowbars. It was heavy work, which necessarily would occupy considerable time in its execution; but I have no doubt of its final accomplishment.

The aspect of these unfortunate creatures bespoke the terrible meagreness of their dietary, which consisted solely of boiled beans; and water is their only drink, coffee—the privation of which they must feel most acutely—being unheard of. As I remarked before, they were treated after the manner of demons. They all wore a forlorn look, which plainly told of the absence of all hope of returning to their native villages. I never saw more woe-begone wretches; they seemed to be just able to keep up an animal existence; and they were in the hands of despotic task-masters who are free and ready to lay them down and bastinado them at will. Enormities and atrocities of the like kind are, of course, but illustrations of a rule such as that of the Viceroy; who yet is permitted to take up new possessions in the heart of Africa, to the utter destruction of the happiness of the poor natives. I paid a visit to the scene of these convicts' operations, where I found them at work in a distressingly abject and heartless condition. They were compelled to labour without intermission; and, if they paused for but a moment, a blow descended on their backs by way of stimulus.

Stopping at this place for the night, we enjoyed the shelter of the tent of the officer in charge of the convict establishment, naturally enough placed at the disposal of the Pasha; Munzinger reposing on the bullock's hide

bed while I was content, like an old traveller, to lie on the ground. The officials, as befitted the occasion, exerted themselves to give us all the hospitality in their power; and we luxuriated in roast chicken, Abyssinian cheese, and dauby bread. In spite of the precautions taken to intercept their access, two convicts, who had been desperately treated and brought to the verge of starvation, seeing a European Pasha, forced their way into our presence and, prostrating themselves on their faces at our feet, prayed for mercy. They were being summarily dragged off (of course, to be bastinadoed), when I inquired what it was the poor wretches particularly complained of; whereupon they stated that they were supplied with the refuse beans, carefully separated from the wholesome mass, and that even these consisted, for the most part, of rats' dirt and other filthy mixture. There was a fiendish refinement of cruelty in thus treating them; and it fully accounted for their dreadfully emaciated appearance, which reminded me of the kittens commemorated at Massouah, that seemed to say—"We are just alive, as you see, with the skin only binding the framework of our bones; and no one will be charitable enough to kill us outright." Munzinger directed the issue of better beans; and, if I mistake not, he remonstrated privately with the khimekar as to the brutality of his treatment.

The sight of the misery of these poor wretches filled my heart with grief; and I could not help reflecting on the hard lot of numbers of beings in the world, cut off as it seems to be from all hope of mitigation, absolutely with-

out a ray of comfort in the future, and simply a prolongation of a cheerless animal existence. The speculation is provoked by such misery: What can be the good of many men being born into the world at all? It was some time before I shook off the gloom inspired by this scene of woe.

CHAPTER XII.

BEDJUK.

We pursued our journey through the water-course of the mountains, making for Bedjuk, which we reckoned upon reaching in the evening. On the way we passed several Abyssinians, armed with spears, driving bullocks and cows, with their humble packs strapped over with hide; which is of universal application through the country. Upon seeing us approach, the wretched oppressed people dashed into the bush and concealed themselves, evidently taking us for slave-catchers; for, however it may be denied at Cairo, Slavery thrives right and left under the nourishing auspices of the Egyptian Government; and they are, besides, in perpetual dread of being pressed into its service as soldiers.

Here we saw two most beautiful codors (large antelopes with spiral horns), of which Munzinger brought down the

female at a long shot. We were now getting on to higher mountains, which were well timbered, and buck became plentiful, as game generally had gradually become. Partridge and guinea-fowl especially got to be very abundant, as may be judged from the fact that I can safely say I have seen flocks of guinea-fowl numbering a thousand. Springs of water also spurted at intervals; and in their neighbourhood it always is most difficult for either horse or mule to get over the ground, which assumes a rocky character; yet the grateful sight of fresh water amply atones for every difficulty. Close to one of these springs we passed a vast herd of large red buck; one of which, fat and in good condition, made an excellent repast for us when we halted for the night at Bedjuk, which we reached at six o'clock in the evening. And thankful I was to have the rest. Fourteen months of hard travel had considerably reduced my physical energy and at the same time depressed my spirits. I therefore was quite tired out, my mind shaded with gloom; and I cannot record the circumstance here without expressing my gratitude to Munzinger Pasha for the sympathetic kindness with which he behaved towards me in that uncheerful condition. Even as he had recently expressed his growing liking for me, I found by this time that he really was a very good fellow. Like the Englishman, the Swiss requires to be known well before mutual appreciation can ensue; and Munzinger Pasha had already developed the tenderness of his character. He applied himself to the provision of delicacies for the refreshment of his patient. Fowl broth was made for me,

and I can well remember that I relished it exceedingly; and a cow was killed, for our encampment had now been amplified by the addition of extra soldiers from the convict establishment and of sundry Abyssinians who had sought the protection of our company.

The woodland scenery of Bedjuk was strikingly beautiful, and the charms of Nature were enhanced by the vocal activity of numerous birds of various kinds. The peculiar melancholy notes of the pigeons were singularly pronounced. This sylvan melody operated upon the susceptible souls of the natives, who began themselves to sing. The echo of their mirth was taken up by the mountains; and occasional flashes of lightning, emphasized by grand rolls of thunder ever and anon, rendered the scene delightfully grand.

The Abyssinians are most skilful in their performances upon stringed instruments. They vary social life with their national music, which is not destitute of beauty. Calling one or two friends together, they fall to the execution of concerts without saying a word. Their principal instrument is shaped like a bow, the base being formed of the dried shell of a large gourd; and the cat-gut strings are struck by a small stick. Musical taste is diffused through the people; in which respect they are very different from the Egyptians; and music is markedly associated with occasions of grief and affliction.

Bedjuk enjoys the advantage of numerous water-springs, and is refreshed with a profusion of tropical vegetation.

I saw several large herds of cattle, the increased productiveness of which, however, is already arrested by the greedy policy of the Viceroy who lays burdens upon the people which they are quite unable to bear. It is but a repetition of the old story — Taxes! Taxes! Taxes! It is simply impossible that they can be met; they are out of all proportion to the ability of the people to discharge them; and, when taxes are collected years in advance, what but overwhelming ruin can be anticipated? In default of payment, which under the circumstances cannot be made, seizure of the cattle takes place. They are slaughtered only with a view to obtaining their hides, which, as I have already observed, fetch a napoleon apiece at Suez, and their carcasses are left to putrid waste. No possible fertility can repair such frightful ravages. The drain upon the stock of cattle has begun to tell severely; signs of impoverishment are everywhere visible; and the arrival of strangers near their huts is regarded by the inhabitants as synonymous with the design of seizing their cattle. Nor does the oppression take only that form, heavy and disastrous as it unquestionably is. Despotism holds nothing sacred. Property is recognised in no shape whatever. Even the domestic hearth is ruthlessly invaded; and it is a well-authenticated fact that Egyptian troops, in bands of 5 or 6, enter the huts of these defenceless Abyssinians and, selecting boys or girls, forcibly remove them from their homes, appropriating them to themselves as slaves or concubines. The relentless course of terrorism thus established already bears fruit in the obvious demoralisation of the natives.

From a race of hardy, high-spirited savages, they rapidly degenerate into a skulking, cowed people. Such are the ethnologic results of the benign rule of His Highness the Viceroy of Egypt.

It is considered a great privilege to be sent to Abyssinia on the Viceroy's service; and it has been his policy to extend the attraction; besides which the claims upon official gratitude are signally discharged by the transfer to this remote field for the exercise of all the arts of jobbery, abreption, and oppression. To talk of the redress of grievances, or of any protection against cruel wrong-doing, is to talk of what no one outside a lunatic asylum can possibly expect. To invoke justice is simply to invite and insure punishment for the audacity; as in the case of three cows I saw forcibly taken from an Abyssinian, whose complaint was followed by his immediate arrest and the infliction of fifty blows upon the lower part of his body; when, of course, he was brought to see the error of his ways and to confess that he was *not* dispossessed by the Egyptian; who was magnanimous enough to pay the khimekar a small sum for the service he had rendered to the cause of truth and justice. Might is right; and it is observable that officialdom thrives well under the delightful system. Whatever it be, or however it be, the Jacks-in-office *must* get something out of it. To the Oriental mind that is the consummation of propriety.

This portion of Abyssinia has a large population; and for the natives I should take the climate to be exceedingly healthy, as I have here observed that the inhabitants

reach more advanced ages than those attained in any part of Africa I have yet travelled in. The women, also, share in this longevity. With their venerable skins tough as buckram (oh so different from the sappy tenderness of youth!), ancient dames, to whom I shall be doing no injustice in fixing their ages at from 90 to 100 years, may be seen lying without their huts in the sun, the solar rays supplementing their deficient natural warmth. This habit of lying out in the sun is peculiar to Orientals; and I have noticed in Egypt that it is resorted to in cases of illness, when the patients are regularly ranged outside their doors. Bleeding is a favorite resource of the Faculty, and there is a firm persuasion that it is to be applied sucessfully to barren women, after the analogy of our treatment of brood mares. I saw two or three submit to the operation in the arm for various supposed disorders, and part with a deal of the vital fluid: but it is held to be of great efficacy in the promotion of the maternal aspirations of the ladies; some of whom were of no mean comeliness. I must do the sex the justice of adding that they are famous makers of lebbin, which is a delicious provision for the climate.

As all Africans do, the natives repose implicit faith in, and have profound admiration of, their medicine-men; who may be seen about with their hide-strapped bundles of dried roots of medicinal herbs, which they profess to have obtained from vast distances in the interior of the country. After the fashion of their European brethren, they pound up their stock-in-trade after the due degree of care in the selection of the diverse materials, and ad-

minister their mixtures with a solemnity of demeanour which, I am inclined to suspect, adds not a little to the healing virtues of their nostrums. Especially in these days of universal scepticism, Faith is a valuable quality in every department of life; and I am not sure that we should be altogether justified in sneering at the simple belief of these poor barbarous Abyssinians in their medicine-men, when we have to face the phenomenon of Homœopathy in civilised and educated Europe. But I suppose that Sir Benjamin Brodie was right when he consoled an eminent brother practitioner of the healing art with the reflection that the human mind is given to the entertainment of the grossest delusions, and that, if Homœopathy did not occupy the vacant corner, some other equivalent absurdity would be certain to take its place. Against Stupidity, says the German poet, the Gods themselves are powerless; and wide is the sway of Stupidity in this world.

Seriously, these medicine-men are said to be highly skilful herbalists, in which respect they remind me strongly of my old friends the Zulu Kafirs.

These tribes do not belong to the same order of fanaticism as many of the Egyptians; and I must add that they include many Roman Catholics in their number. Several Christian villages, dating from a long period, are distributed over the territory; and women may be seen with small silver crosses inserted in their hair. These Christian communities are a very devotional and orderly people; and how Christendom can patiently consent to expose them to the dire severities inflicted upon

them by their Mahommedan oppressors, passes my understanding. They are liable, as I shall continue to repeat, to have both their children and their cattle confiscated at any moment. Of justice for their wrongs, or of anything like redress for their injuries, they unfortunately can entertain no hope whatever. They are under the maleficent shade of a despotism which, sublimely selfish, recks not of the misery it inflicts, and whose only concern for its unhappy subjects centres in the payment by them of taxes without end. These imposts must be wrung out of the poor wretches at any cost of suffering. Only those who have personally witnessed the operation of what is mildly called "the policy of the Viceroy" can have any adequate notion of what it really means. Its ghastly significance can be measured only by close inspection.

Now, as a small illustration of hardships of this sort, let me say that the chief of a Christian settlement, which is by no means an extensive one, has to contribute annually the sum of seven thousand dollars to the revenue of the Viceroy's Mahommedan Government. This sum has to be paid to the day. The word "arrear" is not to be found in the Egyptian vocabulary, while "punctuality" is not only there in the biggest of big type, but most religiously enforced as the highest of civic duties. At the risk of incurring the charge of repetition, I will define the whole duty of man in Egypt as consisting in the ceaseless and unrepining payment of taxes. Well, to proceed with my narrative. There is a currency, all over this part of Abyssinia, of the Marie Louise (Austrian) dollar. How the dollar came to be introduced into the

country, I cannot tell. But it is unquestionable that there is an immense stock of these dollars in it. They bespeak a very gratifying degree of ready-money wealth, it is not to be denied; and never will the Viceroy be satisfied until he has extracted every one out of the soil. It would not square with the eternal fitness of things, as understood by him, to suffer the soul-destroying accumulations to remain unappropriated. Have them all he will and must; so he has annexed the country to his dominions, and a rich haul he has already made out of it both with the Marie Louise dollars, and with the cattle in default thereof. The officials, resolute to obtain the coin (by which they are spared all the trouble of seizing and slaughtering the cattle and sending the hides for realization to Cairo), insist upon payment in that particular form. As has happened in the Zulu country, where the circulation of our English coinage has been defeated by burial of the metallic wealth, so it has occurred here. The poor pillaged folk hide their possessions in the earth, and thus strive to hold on to their tangible and portable all; but Egyptian officials are famous proficients in the art of screwing it out; and, where there is the slightest reason to suspect that the treasure has been secreted, the bastinado is freely employed to enforce delivery.

And the bastinado will not fail of all but universal success. In process of time, when all the available treasure has been gotten out of them by that most potent of means, recourse will be had to the cattle, which simply will be slaughtered to extermination.

In short, here will be realised what has already taken

place with his subjects on the borders of the Nile and in the land of Goshen, where fertile crops are grown only for the purpose of being seized. Gambling is an indulgence at once expensive and destructive. The hold it acquires on its victim strengthens with increase of years, and suffers no restraint of prudence. When a despot turns gambler, the fate of millions of his subjects is involved in his ruinous play.

The Egyptian troops being the conquerors of the country, it is not surprising to find that the natives of Egypt are highly favoured; and even liberated convicts, originally sent here, occupy a better position than the natives of Abyssinia. The country is overrun with the worst class of Orientals possible to be pictured by the most active imagination; and crime, under the circumstances, is but the natural fruit of the social environment. It can readily be understood that the records of crime bear no proportion to the commission of crime. Deeds of violence are shrouded in obscurity; yet they frequently emerge into the upper air of public notoriety. In Bedjuk, a few years ago, was murdered an Italian, married to a poor Abyssinian woman, who kept a small goods store, the urgent motive of the murder being the sum of one dollar upon his person. I saw his widow and her half-bred boy,—a little fellow with lustrous eyes and of a smart bearing; a striking anthropological specimen of the mixture of Italian and Abyssinian blood. By virtue of his intelligence he was the source of great interest to the chief of the tribe to which his mother, on the loss of her protector, returned.

The country, as we journeyed onwards, lost none of its picturesqueness. It spread before us an extensive plain surrounded by lofty mountains; and we sighted two magnificent lions (for we had now penetrated into the region of lions), these monarchs of the forest abounding where large herds of cattle are. Let the reader not smile at the parallel: but they are given to making severe raids upon their neighbours, like the despot of the soil, though I must do the majestic quadruped the justice to add that he is not wasteful after the example of his biped analogue.

The day was very hot, far more favourable for lounging than for exercise; and we had a numerous deputation of chiefs of various tribes who came down bearing presents of cows and goats and lebbin. Munzinger Pasha, assuming his proudest official manner, gave them audience. Unfortunately Munzinger does not rejoice in a beautiful visage; in fact, I might put the remark into the positive form of saying that he is very ugly; and the absence of teeth in his head but helped to emphasise his ill-favoured looks. With all his efforts, therefore, he failed to sustain a comparison with some of these men, who were of stately presence, and whose teeth are unrivalled in the world for their whiteness and regularity.

One of these chiefs was, I think, the brother of Munzinger's wife,—a very presentable man, who was arrayed, I remember, in a robe of Indian texture with pink border. As became his rank and connexion, he came down riding upon a camel, attended by a large retinue of the magnates of his camp, and was received

with every mark of respect by the Pasha. He was highly intelligent and remarkable for the ease and grace of his manners; and he was accompanied by his son, who shared the paternal gifts of Nature. In this semi-Arabic region it is an advantage to have your successor by your side, the first question asked being, Have you a son? If the answer should be in the negative, they cast their eyes to the ground and say no more; whereas the presence of the heir inspires them with an affectionate regard.

Munzinger himself has adopted the son of his wife by her previous marriage; and, though the young man is a thorough Abyssinian, he holds a Major's commission in the Viceroy's Army, and also acts in a judicial capacity in the divan. His youth—he is only twenty-one—apparently is reckoned as no disqualification for the discharge of such office; to which enlarged experience of the world and gravity of temper are usually thought to be indispensable. Thus he combines the levity of juvenility with the absolutism of military life; and I am sure it will occasion no shock of surprise to the reader to learn that, when either plaintiff or defendant makes a remark which His Honour thinks objectionable, His Honour jumps up from the seat of dignity and whacks the offender in the face. This I am bound to disclose, from a sense of the imperative claims of truth to have promulgation all the world over. At the same time I thankfully acknowledge his personal kindness to myself. His civility and attention to me could not well be surpassed. When I was ill, he would bring me the coffee with his own hands; and

altogether I have no hesitation in saying that he was the best friend I had in Abyssinia.

Some Aden Arabs also waited upon us. Their immigration took place under the special encouragement of the local authorities, who arranged for the payment by them of reduced taxes on the condition that they should take up arms in behalf of the Viceroy in the event of an Abyssinian rising. A few native slaves were in their train. They are a bad class of Arabs, but one, I was told, growing into importance as a wealthy community. As I have already observed, the Banyans have been the most successful immigrants; which fact is accounted for by the circumstance that they are under the protection of the English flag, and free from the extortions levied upon their less favoured neighbours.

All the night long we continued to be disturbed by the roaring of lions, and on one or two occasions they could not have been far distant from us.

M. Perrout, who had preceded us some days before, overtook us here. He represented that he had been twelve days in the desert upon very limited food. His horse had got sore-backed; and he found his saddle, which had been exposed at night, had actually been gnawed to pieces by the hyænas, attracted to it by the copious discharge of the wound on its padding. The effect of this misadventure was that he had to ride upon the bare back of the poor animal, which being a bag of bones rendered the operation not unlike that of riding a hurdle.

On our way hence we saw great herds of ante-

lopes. My horse proving unequal to the work, I allowed the Pasha to precede me; and, knowing that I had ample time to overtake him before night-fall, I followed at leisure. Coming to a river which the mountain torrents had agitated and swollen considerably, the natives in attendance upon me swam across, leading their horses by the reins; and I was directed to do the same. While I was engaged in divesting myself of my garments, one of the two goats prudently reserved for the night's meal lest we should not reach our destination on that evening was suddenly pounced upon by a large leopard. Seizing the gun from the hand of the attendant nearest to me, I fired and broke the animal's fore-leg. Its fury upon finding its shoulder dislocated was terrific. It span round with the goat in its mouth, as a terrier would with a rat, until up rushed another Abyssinian with a stout spear, which he sent right through the lungs. It was a scene of excitement; and the excitement was most welcome, calculated as it always is to drive away agues, fevers, and all other maladies of the like nature. The animal died shortly from loss of blood, and the look of impotent fury with which it regarded the goat, because it had not been able to execute its fell purpose, was most striking.

After crossing the river, we were traversing the thick woodland and had got opposite to another ford of the river when, to my astonishment, I heard a strong Abyssinian eunuch lustily shouting, 'Harem! Harem!' and bidding us clear out of the way of the ladies. But I was in no humour to comply with the demand; and, full

MOVING A HAREM.

of an enthusiasm which took no account of his inability to understand English, I bade him know that I never yet was afraid of woman, and never meant to be. Soon appeared the camel freighted with its howdah occupied by the ladies. As if it had had enough of it, the camel proceeded to sink on its knees, and the ladies shrieked furiously; whereupon another eunuch, who represented an important part of the female commissariat in the large bag full of dates he was carrying on his back, rushed up to the terrified dames and, by way of stopping their row, crammed a handful of dates down their throats. This was instead of the *eau-de-Cologne,* as we should apply it; and I must confess that they took the recipe with evident satisfaction.

My anxiety to render what assistance I could in the transport of the ladies was defeated by the eunuchs, who implored us to leave and not to invade the privacy of the ladies. When I found that my generosity was not duly appreciated, I began to rail at the stupidity of an ungrateful world; and any fears I might have entertained respecting their safety in getting across were allayed by the reflection that the eunuchs would, for their own sake, take all necessary precautions against danger. Accordingly I went on my way, nor was it long before I saw them upon the bank, I suppose invoking Mahommed to help them in their extremity. In the whole course of my wanderings in Egypt, let me say, I never saw a Mahommedan woman at her prayers. Though my intercourse with Oriental life has been of the closest character, I never observed even a tendency on the part of the sex to

devotion. And why should they have a care in that direction, seeing that their accepted theory has it that woman is a perishable toy, without the responsible adjunct of a soul?

A tremendous thunderstorm overtook us on the way with the suddenness usual here. The flashes of lightning were most vivid, the rolls of thunder sublimely grand. It was a spectacle of unexampled severity; and its impressiveness was increased by the roars of a lion, who, as if provoked by the artillery of the sky, between the lulls of the storm asserted his own claim to be heard. At that moment we were ascending a mountain pass; and on a sudden it became positively dark; and I was startled by my negroes darting back with the exclamation that a lion stopped the way. It was true that I could not see him myself; but that only made me feel the insecurity of my position all the more, as these men never mistake in sighting large game. While I continued in doubt, a roar of surpassing power directed my eye to the spot; and there, sure enough, he stood with head erect as though defying the thunder. Just at that instant of time there was a heavy fall of hail, so severe and sharp that it stung me through my boots and, piercing my nose and ears, caused them to bleed. It was rather like the descent of acute sections of ice, and added another element to our confusion. But it had the good effect of scaring the lion away. What might have ensued had we not been thus relieved of his presence, it is not pleasant even to speculate.

There was not a sign of cultivation hereabouts, the

vegetation consisting of shrubs and creepers which had the odour of the orange.

For a considerable time I was left alone, my attendants having precipitately fled upon seeing the lion; and, feeling cold without and hot within as if a fever had ensued upon the chill, I got off my horse and allayed the heat by partaking freely of the ice. It worked a speedy relief, as it happily did with me when I was prostrated with African fever, upon my return from Central Africa, when all hope of my recovery was given up. There can be no question that ice then was the agent of my restoration to health; I may be said almost to have lived upon it, eating as much as two pounds at a time. I employed myself thus until the return of the negroes, who were relieved at the cessation of the hail and the departure of the tiger, but greatly distressed by the thunder; which, indeed, no African can stand. I was drenched to the skin, and felt both cold and exhausted; so I resolved to make straight for some native huts which we opportunely sighted, and to seek shelter with the inmates for the night.

It was the rainy season, and heavy downpours soon proclaimed its regularity.

I enjoyed the hospitality of a kind-hearted chief, and my only regret was that my limited knowledge of his native tongue did not enable me to converse with the good man as freely and as copiously as I could have wished, for he lavished attentions upon me. We had a meal which consisted of Indian corn bread, boiled beef, and lebbin,—a very comfortable repast to which ample

justice was done. The hut was scrupulously swept out, and I enjoyed sound rest for the night, with a feeling of security against wild beasts; a wicker-work gate, something like a wattle hurdle, being set before the door.

He told me there was a number of lions about. Only the day before he had seen six; which he interpreted as the sign of tempestuous weather, the habits of birds and beasts serving as almanacs to these rude observers of Nature; and producing a curiously carved tally, of some hard wood, he marked the past storm, as he had notched the record of every storm he had witnessed for years gone by. In fine, they seemed to preserve records of everything that impressed them. But the Viceroy is likely to interfere seriously with this quiet pursuit of the observation of natural phenomena.

The women here enjoy exceptional privileges, and their social worth is recognised far beyond the standard of Egyptian ideas. They wait upon you, are about the household openly, and join in conversation with the men in public; and this salutary freedom is unrestrained until they are taken in bondage by the Egyptians who enforce the discipline of the veil upon them. Some of them are highly attractive; but their number is limited, the harem being replenished from this source. When a strikingly beautiful flower blooms, it is of course transplanted to that vice-regal bed.

CHAPTER XIII.

KEREN.

KEREN was reached the next day.

Here the first object that attracted my observation was the large encampment of four hundred huts occupied by Soudan black troops, foot with artillery,—the finest black troops I ever saw. Originally slaves, they have been converted into an army of oppression for Abyssinia, the natives of which and the Soudans hate one another with a fierce hatred. They find ample and congenial employment in raids, seizing corn and cattle from the inhabitants of the Bogos territory which the Viceroy has recently claimed as his own. It is a cheap mode of provisioning an army; and you cannot satisfy the African better than by giving him his fill of beef. This he gets without stint here, eight cows being slaughtered daily for the use of the camp. And talk of excitement!

It is memorable to see the excitement that pervades the camp when an animal is killed. It is immediately chopped up and distributed; the favourite mode of cooking being to roast it over a bright fire. When several cows are despatched at once, they celebrate the occasion by forming a ring round the carcasses and executing a war-dance; for which one, taking up a club, sings the solo; the time being marked with the club. The chorus is an animated one, somewhat after the strains of the Zulus.

These Soudan troops, on parade, wear white trousers and tunics, and, equipped with fez and boots, make a very fine show indeed; the closest attention being given to their tidiness. As we approached the gate of the encampment, the great thorn tree, placed there to keep off the hyænas, was removed to admit of our passage. A high earthen embankment, surmounted by acacia branches and encompassed with a ditch, protected the encampment, and gave it the air of a fortified place; and the idea of employing thorn boughs really is not so simple as it looks when we know that the older these get the tougher they become, that they will last for five or six years, and that the hyænas will not face the prickly opposition.

The bugle sounded; the guards presented arms. My arrival, it was easy to see, was not unexpected, and I was conducted to a hut evidently prepared for my accommodation; but there was no sign that night of Munzinger Pasha, whom I had agreed to meet here. He was engrossed with the company of his sable Abyssinian wife;

THE CAMP AT KEREN.

and I readily excused his inattention to myself. Besides, it was politic to maintain a certain dignified reserve of demeanour before the camp; and, as I have before recorded, good fellow as he was, he rather liked to indulge in a high and mighty style on his own account. His reception of me on the following day, however, was so formal and stiff that I did not care to remain in his tent for any length of time. It reminded me of Dr. Beke's experience of him, when he told the Doctor he had too much John Bull in him; to which the meek reply was—"A little more John Bull in you would not be amiss;" in which particular I coincide with his critic. This was on Saturday; and the honour of my presence was bespoke at a review to be given next morning.

Of course I was anxious to assist at the military spectacle, admirably adapted to astonish the natives of the newly acquired Bogos territory; but I could not make my appearance upon my nag, which was quite jaded, and it would never do for me to mount my donkey on an occasion of such importance. I confided my difficulty to a very intelligent black major in command of the garrison, who by the way had fought in Mexico and spoke a few words of English; and at seven in the morning (everything in this part of the world having to be done early) a horse awaited me; the band struck up the Viceroy's Hymn; and the troops filed out of the encampment. I prepared to follow, but was told I should not appear for at least half an hour more; at the end of which time I caught sight of Munzinger Pasha in the gorgeous uni-

form of brigadier-general of the Egyptian army, which extorted the admiration of the Arab and nigger beholders. The coming event had drawn together a vast concourse of spectators, and hundreds upon hundreds of wild Abyssinians had arrived from the interior to witness it.

We went on to a vast plain, situate between the villages of Sanheit and Keren* and backed by the mountains and forests. The rugged environment was in keeping with the whole exhibition, and gave it a character of its own. The band discoursed one or two ridiculous Turkish airs, which, at the suggestion of Munzinger, were followed by that lovely melody which will certainly embalm the memory of Tom Moore, and which is such a favourite all over the East,—'The Last Rose of Summer.' It was a compliment kindly designed for my gratification, and the pathos of the tune in this *ultimâ Thule* would touch the least sentimental; nor was I too Stoic to yield to the influence of the associations evoked by it; yet my reverie was dashed with the conviction that I literally was alone here, and that, after all our labours for their advantage, they were exceedingly jealous of our trading in the country and thus interfering with their own notions and modes of life. There is not an English trader in the whole extent of the territory, and the only Englishman I ever heard of as residing in Abyssinia was an Abyssinian Colonel Kirkham.

* In the rear of Keren is a mountain appropriately named the Mountain of Apes, where some of the largest baboons are domiciled.

When the band ceased, the military evolutions began. They were executed most creditably, and I was particularly struck by their target-firing, which was indeed very good. An awful sight was a Circassian general, or other officer in command, who kept his native steed—all neck and tail—flying about in all directions, he the while brandishing his sword wildly in the air. Such was the copious energy of this astonishing man's sword-flourishing that I was fain to get well out of the range of his formidable blade, lest my head should accidentally be severed by it in the terrible warmth of his martial excitement; so I lost no time in placing myself close behind the Pasha himself, in the line of his own body-guard. The mighty Circassian was drill-master as well as general, and a right severe one he was, too; overwhelming the blundering soldiers with tremendous blows of his stick, which made the unfortunate niggers turn white with pain and fear. The severity of his discipline may perhaps be excused by the hardness of the materials he operated upon; but he certainly had drilled them into a state of efficiency. Their firing especially was in good time, and must have convinced the natives that their spears would prove sorry weapons against rifles handled with such precision. The martial display indeed had not been lost upon them. They looked on in perfect terror.

At the termination of the review, I saw a large number of black officers—black as ebony—in red trousers and blue coats. They were evidently pleased with the part they had taken in the late demonstration; and they went from one to another, strutting and spitting about in all

directions, and in true nigger style inspecting their several adornments.

On our return to the encampment, the Arab officers were regaled with a substantial lunch of boiled beef and mutton, with coffee for drink; of which we of course partook out of capacious bowls on the floor. Munzinger Pasha himself never uses knife and fork, but with the rest of the company dipped into the dishes, which contained the food cut into small pieces. It was far from being a lively entertainment. There was no conversation; if the silence was broken, it seemingly was to pass small disparaging comments of a personal kind. If the Pasha could have dared to produce spirits before the company, a more genial condition of things might have resulted; but that was not to be thought of in the presence of Mahommedans. The lunch, therefore, degenerated into a gross feed, after the manner of Teetotal spreads; at which there may not be much to drink but an amazing quantity of eating is got through. These Arabs gorged, giving themselves no time to chew the food; and the bowls and dishes were cleared out in the twinkling of an eye.

I must not forget to add that about two hundred Abyssinian chiefs, anxious to see him, encircled the tent of the Pasha.

What designs they thought I cherished, it is not for me to say. I have already spoken of the paternal interest evinced in my movements; and now over the hut I occupied an Abyssinian soldier was set to keep guard. I reposed on a bullock's hide stretcher, which, cool and

agreeable as it was to lie on, did not save me from the rats, which ran over my body in scores all the night. Altogether, from the sense of espionage and other considerations, my stay at the camp was not a pleasant one; and my dissatisfaction was increased by the breaking-out of a fire, whereupon ensued the most violent excitement, no water being at hand to extinguish it. To prevent its spread, the usual Abyssinian mode was adopted, of throwing stones upon the burning mass and pulling down the adjoining huts. The fire originated in the carelessness of a native who fell asleep while boiling coffee. Since my departure from Keren, about four hundred huts have been destroyed, as I predicted they would some day be, owing to the wilful heedlessness of the people. Instead of using all possible precautions against accidents of the kind, they do not seem to think of the dangerously inviting material of their habitations.

These huts are made exclusively of grass,—a grass of a fine fibrous character which grows to the height of five feet, and of which (disposed in well-shaped bundles) a dollar will purchase sufficient for the construction of a hut of considerable size. The required degree of architectural skill is not despicable. The skeleton of the hut is set up with stakes and twigs cut from the forest, and the grass woven into the interstices with no little deftness; and these erections will last for years. But the nature of the materials and the close continuity of their rows render the risk of fire somewhat alarming. There can be no question, however, that these huts are the things for Abyssinia. They are in every way superior to the huts

on the coast, which simply consist of matting fastened over sticks. In winter they are cozily warm with the fires that are kept in, and gratefully cool in summer, from whose heat they provide an enjoyable shade.

On Monday we went to seek sport in the mountains; and, while we halted for the purpose of surveying the ground as to the direction we should take, we encountered two baboons. The male, who was an immense animal, quite as large (as my companion, Mr. Voight, will testify) as the gorilla in the Museum of the Anthropological Society, attracted observation by barking at us like a huge dog from the ledge of a rock, from which it was not easy to distinguish his colour. Turning to see whence the barking came, we espied the female swinging off a tree and taking her seat beside her mate. She was only half his size; but he was a monster. To have killed him would have been a triumph; but to have missed him, or only to have wounded him, would have been certain death to us, for he would assuredly have turned savagely upon us; and his jaws and paws both denoted his capacity for dealing with assailants. The couple, however, soon retreated. These baboons, the natives told us, were very uncommon, and always to be seen in couples. Believing in the doctrine of metempsychosis, according to which they invest these simial forms with the spirits of departed giants, they seemed to rejoice that we had not killed them. In fact, when the animals got away, they assured us that we could not kill them, being "effreets."

Of buck and mountain partridge, which latter was

very good eating, we had plentiful provision before our return home. On the morrow we purposed paying a visit to a Catholic priest, in the neighbourhood, of very pronounced sporting proclivities, to see if we could not get up a leopard hunt. About three miles from Keren, in one of the wildest parts of Abyssinia, they are numerous; and, as the Egyptian Arab does not care for hunting, both leopards and lions are undisturbed.

At an early hour next morning we made our way to the residence of the priest, whom I found to be assisted in his clerical labours by another "father." It was conveniently placed, right at the base of a mountain and in the centre of the extensive village of Keren; of which the eight hundred huts occupied by Catholic Christians form no inconsiderable portion. The habitation may be described as a long grass hut, lined within with matting and divided into three parts; two being sleeping apartments, and the third applied to all the purposes of drawing-room, parlour, and library. When Exeter Hall (in Macaulay's famous phrase) "brays," as it annually does, about the missionary work it supposes itself to have achieved, it takes no account whatever of the silent heroism and devoted usefulness of men like these priests, who are content—without any flourish of trumpets—to fill their obscure stations in the ecclesiastical system. Nothing but fervour of soul of the most marked type could reconcile men to the patient and cheerful endurance of the privations and perils incident to their lot; which, be it remembered, does not reckon loud advertisement of its triumphs among its attractions and consolations.

And it speaks volumes for the missionary energy of the Church represented by the "fathers" here that it should have penetrated to, and (what is more) maintained itself in, this advanced outpost of civilisation.

A stone church was projected for the service of the numerous flock, and some progress made in the work; that is to say, the foundation was laid, and the walls began to ascend: but the science of the architect, a wretched Swiss, was confessedly unequal to the imposition of a roof, and there the unfinished edifice stands, a strange memorial of human folly and weakness. He was an amateur, I presume, who had not exactly measured the extent of his powers. The church or chapel, pending the arrival of competent aid, continues to be in the long shed adjacent to the house.

The domestic appurtènances embrace an ample enclosure fenced in with matting, with gate of the same material, which, by reason of the stoutness of the woven grass, is found to be very durable. In this enclosure are fifty cows, with an adequate supply of goats and sheep and plenty of poultry; shewing that, if the wants of the fathers were but few and simple, they were liberally provided for. The plot of ground at the back is the vegetable garden, which has the distinction of having grown the first potatoes raised in Abyssinia.

The place is exalted in local tradition as the final resting-place of the black mother of Munzinger Pasha's black wife. She was a native Christian, and had large possessions in cattle. She also was the mother of a large family, Munzinger's sisters-in-law being as thick as

blackberries. Somehow it appeared that I was the object of no little solicitude as to what is called settlement in life. I think I have already recorded that the Bedouins desired my accession to their ranks; and now it was delicately suggested that I should form an alliance with one of these numerous maidens. Her complexion was all that could be desired in the way of defying freckles and other cutaneous afflictions which British wives mitigate with expensive toilet applications. Rowland, and Rimmel, and Piesse and Lubin, and the whole tribe of perfumers and providers of costly "requisites" who make Bond Street so odorous, could have no terrors for me. But I could not clearly see my way to the realisation of all those domestic comforts which I am far from saying that she was not eminently qualified to dispense, and I was compelled to say that my matrimonial propensities just then were in abeyance.

The women here were good-looking, with aquiline noses; and it is well known that, if you see an aquiline-nosed African, you see a good-looking person—without the serious drawback of thick lips. There must have been European settlers here long before our knowledge of their presence, for I saw some instances of a half-caste race possessing strongly marked European features; the feet betraying the African part of their origin, while the forehead and the face bespoke the European. So far as my observation extends, that is the distinction to be noted in all half-caste races, as in the case of the Hottentots; on which subject I have expressed my views ully in the 'Anthropological Review.'

My kind host, the padre, had been yellowed by the climate, which, after a certain number of years in these tropical regions, takes possession of the European, and invests him with a very pronounced bilious appearance. A more serious effect is that it takes all the animation out of a man; it deprives you of hearty energy; and one not able so to account for it might have interpreted the languor into want of cordiality in the reception I obtained. But during my brief sojourn in these parts I had come to understand what the climate meant.

We breakfasted in the verandah, and I must be careful to mention that the repast included a delightful salad, such as the Frenchman, who has a nationally keen eye to the utilisation of the vegetable productions of Nature, so well knows how to provide wherever he may be.

The ascent of the mountain was effected on donkeys, and we had not gone far before we started two little red antelopes, which came down to the guns of Mr. Voight and the priest. Now it was that the excitement of the Frenchman broke out. The good man's face beamed with satisfaction; the prospect of venison clearly was appetising; and who shall take exception to the perfectly rational and legitimate delight? The bodies were quickly taken up by two Abyssinians and conveyed to the local Vatican, where I knew we should feast on them on our return; the culinary appliances of the establishment certifying the educated palate of its owner. He was opposed to wholesale slaughter, holding that it was a shame to destroy more than we required, and proposed to kill one more buck for presentation to the Pasha.

We had by this time got almost into the thick of a forest of luxuriant vegetation, enlivened with the chatter of beautiful birds, among which were the quaint little "sugar birds," which, I believe, are quite new to Science. On a sudden we heard the barking of our native dogs (the best native breed I have yet seen in Africa), and the vegetable undergrowth was observed to be moving rapidly, as if a whirlwind were playing over it. This was soon explained by the appearance of two small leopards, which sprang out and made for the stump of an old tree, on the top of which one seated itself while the other crouched by its side. It was a grand sight to see them baying the dogs, which did nothing but bark and show their teeth, as also did the leopards with every sign of savage fury; and it was interrupted by the despatch of a bullet which crippled the foreleg of one animal, and of a second shot which hit the other on its side. Their rage knew no bounds. Disabled and maddened with pain, they lay growling on the earth until overcome with exhaustion from loss of blood. We fired again, but so as not to injure their fine skins, and, to complete the business, two Abyssinians rushed up with spears and finally despatched them. I rejoiced in the wonderful bit of luck which enabled me to become the happy possessor of their hides, and only regretted that the sport was of such short duration. The next thing to be done was to skin them. This I helped to do myself, and by the time it was done our work was over for the day.

As we turned a corner of the mountain pass, we sighted

a large troop of (I should say about two hundred) great baboons. Their size was no doubt rendered impressive by their congregation; but they were not near the size of the two gorillas, which I am perfectly convinced were a new species of that animal; and it has been a lasting source of regret to me that I was unable to secure the skeleton of one of them for that distinguished naturalist, Mr. Cutter, of Bloomsbury Street, who generally takes all my Natural History and Antique collections.

We reached home just before sundown, partridge and guinea-fowl popping up as we went along; the latter, at this season of the year, being in first-rate condition. Within half an hour's walk of Keren I have found hundreds of their eggs,—and very delicious they are; in fact, they are to be found all over the bush in this region.

We this day witnessed the passage through Keren of about fifty boys (of from sixteen to twenty years of age), under the escort of black soldiers and chained in couples.* They were from some far distant point in the interior, having been forty days on the way, and wore most piteous looks; and it is impossible for any sane man to doubt for a moment that they were destined for slaves. How often shall it be necessary to repeat, for the information of English philanthropists who have persuaded themselves that the Viceroy discountenances Slavery, that

* The convicts set to hard labour are chained in twos. Frequently you may see an Arab and an Abyssinian thus coupled, engaged in conveying stone for buildings. The cultivation of the soil by the vast army of the Viceroy is never thought of. It is so much easier to plunder the Abyssinian tribes all round.

he absolutely derives a large revenue from that hateful source? Let them remember the fact that the Arab never works if he has money enough to buy a slave. The national character of the Arab favours the indulgence. When he goes out on his donkey, he must have a slave to walk by his side and urge the donkey on. He must have a slave to prepare his coffee, and a slave to wash his feet;—a slave for every office that can be discharged by another for one's own convenience. And there are other vile purposes which it causes a shudder to think of; and I dismiss this awful subject with the remark that I have never yet seen an Arab eunuch. *Verbum sap.!*

The verandah in the priest's house was where I lay down to rest; but I was in a mortal funk all night, kept awake by the howling of hyænas, and right glad I was when morning broke.

CHAPTER XIV.

RETURN TO MASSOUAH.

RETURNING to the encampment, I spent a few days there, and determined, as soon as I could procure camels and mules, to start for the coast.

I had now been in these regions for over two months, during which I made several excursions into the interior; but it was obvious that I was regarded as a spy. I could see signs that my inquiring habits were not to the taste of those around me; and I deemed it prudent to clear out of the place as privately as I could. So I left without making any adieux, saying I should be back in a few days, and carefully concealing my present route. I had hired as servant an Abyssinian of unsurpassed faithfulness, a really fine fellow, called Ali, who proved to be so devoted to my interests that I greatly regret I could not bring him home with me.

My first night was spent at an Arab encampment, the chief of which, I can well remember, was (as he seemed to me to be) a Turk,—a mean, selfish fellow, who desired to possess himself of almost every thing I had. All I got in the way of food here was boiled Egyptian beans, rendered palatable by the infusion of lime juice; which I can warrant as a good lasting food, as fare that sticks to the traveller and makes him feel that he has had a sufficing meal. Coffee followed as matter of course.

Next day I was at an Abyssinian village, where I got kind treatment. Sour milk was the beverage, and I indulged in the luxury of guinea-fowl, which I was particular personally to attend to the cooking of. It was some time since I had tasted roast, and I resolved that this should be a memorable episode in my Abyssinian career; so, having got a clear wood fire, I set the fowl on a handy gridiron that fortunately formed part of my limited baggage, and contrived to do no little culinary justice to this fine-flavoured game. It may seem a small incident to the indolent reader, much at his ease in home or inn; but "circumstances alter cases," as the well-known platitude has it; and at the time I was very far from being insensible to the attractions of roast guinea-fowl.

The chief of this village seemed to be well pleased upon his interview with me. Personally he did all he could to make me comfortable; and in a long conversation, which he held in Abyssinian, interpreted to me by Ali who could speak Arabic, he bewailed the hardship of the Viceroy's uncontrolled rule over the territory. Soon,

said he, all the cattle would be annihilated, and then he did not know what would become of them. Repeating what is a familiar fact to all observers, he added that it was useless to grow corn, for the Egyptian army never scrupled to appropriate it; and, if they ventured to remonstrate, their only reward was the bastinado, followed up by the frightful punishment of being tied up by one leg, ringed in a wall, and compelled to stand for days in that painful position. I have myself inspected the filthy jails in which the poor creatures were undergoing that ingeniously tormenting penalty. But to what diabolic refinements of cruelty is Egyptian despotism not capable of resorting?

Next night I had to stop out on the open felt. The Abyssinians in my company immediately proceeded to cut down branches of the acacia thorn, and made a circle large enough to take in our mules and camels; the former of which we took the precaution of knee-haltering. This was done as a protection against the lions. Ali was in a state of great anxiety all the night about them, and required all the assurances of the old Abyssinian to appease him. In about half an hour we had quite a body-guard, from the native huts in the neighbourhood, of able-bodied young fellows armed with spears, who brought in a large piece of beef with them; nor were these our sole visitors. Several nice-looking girls,—the sisters, I believe of the young men who so generously came to our protection,—also came in to see "the big Englishman" whose arrival had been reported at their village. They danced up to midnight, and amused me

immoderately.* Like all African dancing, theirs required to be seen to be appreciated. The whole arrangements of this garden-party really were very pleasant. I am not ashamed to own that I like barbarians. I always did, and always shall. Their kindness is so purely genuine, without the taint of selfishness about it.

Shortly after retiring to rest our peaceful community was startled out of its propriety by the terrific roar of a lion, which affected me as though a stone had been hurled at my backbone. It was plain he had smelt us out, and his nearness to us tried the fortitude of all. It was a grand moonlight night, as bright as ever gladdened either traveller's or lover's heart; and we could see the brute stalking wildly without the thorn-bush enclosure, which was all that separated us from him. It was a moment of supreme danger, in which memories of home and its tender associations flashed through the mind. But the danger had to be faced. All around me were in an agony of terror, the women crouching with their faces on the ground. I hesitated to fire. I knew not what might result from the operation. I positively had only three rounds of ball cartridge, which I feared parting with; and—horrible to relate!—when I examined the rifles and knapsacks of the two guides, I found they had bartered away the ammunition that had been given them at the Soudan camp! This discovery increased my per-

* The only covering they had on was a little cloth round the waist. There are but few women here; they have been drained off to fill Egyptian establishments. Taxes and harems together make the life of the people unspeakably lively.

plexity; it almost paralysed me. The brute meanwhile continued to roar, the roars being like claps of thunder. (It was curious to see—I can picture it as I write—his shadow projected before us.) Suddenly we heard the roar of another, which, when she came up, proved to be the lioness. I immediately felt relieved, knowing that, as with dogs, ferocity would yield to gallantry. It was as I anticipated. They indulged in mutual lickings, and kept pacing about; and it was not until near daylight that we were quit of our unpleasant visitors.

Proportionate to their prostration was the exultation of the Abyssinians at their release from the serious danger by which we had been so recently threatened. A vast jabbering ensued. They seemed to be full of the menacing event, and somehow connected me with their escape. Indeed, in such parts of the uncivilised world as I have travelled over, my experience has been that the natives think they are as safe under the protection of an Englishman as if they were in the keeping of their own effreets.

Our course in the morning was through richly diversified country, but bare of all signs of cultivation except a few straggling patches of Indian corn; and the headmen of the villages were in charge of large herds of cattle, representing their worldly all. From afar I observed that we were approaching what I at first took to be European tents. These on closer view resolved themselves into the tombs in the burial-ground of a powerful Abyssinian tribe. These tombs, which are built perfectly round and are from four to five feet high, are some of them pro-

fusely ornamented, and mark the spots beside some favourite trees where in life the departed loved to meditate, the elevation of the place favouring the command of view of their cattle feeding in the distance. In every village there always is one large tree to which the simple inhabitants repair for prolonged conversation, at the conclusion of which, like all Africans, they jump up simultaneously and separate to their various homes.

Learning that the women, who had risen early in the morning for the purpose, were busy making Abyssinian beer, I tried hard to get acquainted with the process, but did not succeed. They guarded the receipt for its manufacture with jealous secrecy, and could not be tempted by me to its disclosure: but I was accommodated with a draught of it, which, though refreshing, was by no means agreeable; not near so good as the Kafir jalar.

Up to the confines of the desert, the scenery continued to be attractive, and the soil deep alluvium, capable of growing anything, but which, under the existing order of things, serves no purpose of utility. All is a barren waste. When I saw my Abyssinians engaged in filling their water-skins and loading our three camels with the supplies, it was easy to gather that we were on the eve of a long desert passage; and, when we crossed another ridge of mountains, we were at the Desert, which it would take six days' fair travelling by night (we could not venture to go on by day) to cross. Bustard and plover here were in great abundance, these two species of bird consorting apparently in the same region. I have a strong suspicion that in Africa the bustard is nearly

connected with the plover, its habits being somewhat similar, according to my observation of foreign Natural History, though one is a huge monster beside the other. We rested beneath a tree the ample extent of whose branches gave promise of grateful shade; but we were not long in discovering that it was a sensitive acacia which yielded to the increasing heat; which nearly drove our mules to break their halters for the relief of change of position. In a few minutes they were attacked on the legs by bug-shaped insects, which caused the blood to stream. I administered carbolic acid, which was a decided check, although it did not stop the effusion entirely. The strange thing was that the camels were not similarly invaded. As evening came on, we could not sit still for the irritation of their biting. They were of various sizes, some as large again as the London bug or the sheep tick, others as minute as fleas. When they had taken their fill they burst, their gluttony, like that of the tick family, being the means of their destruction. Their existence finishes even as does that of moths; they leave the world after making a deposit of eggs in the erupted blood; which accounts for their propagation, the blood drying around the deposit being its nutriment; and in twenty-four hours they start into life. Tick life here, as in South and Central Africa, to which I have already devoted attention, is very curious.

Starting at sundown, we went in immediate quest of a well dug by the natives which an Abyssinian had informed us would be found three hours hence, the heat of the day having caused large demands to be made upon our supply

of water; of which we should not see any more for three days. We reached it at 10 o'clock, and our camels exhibited some impatience to be served. Though it was thick and muddy, we were only too glad to fill our empty water-skins, and our animals were indulged with the thick moisture to repletion. A bright moon shone on our way, but it was only to enable us to realise more vividly the far-reaching desolation of sand. As morning broke, we saw in the distance a wandering tribe, half Arab, half Abyssinian, which we identified as being Mahommedan by observing one of the number with a red turban, indicating that he had been once to Mecca. They were about finishing the milking of their goats; and, in the utter absence of a vestige of vegetation, it seemed curious there should be any milk. They had just buried a member of the tribe; and upon the conclusion of the ceremony they put their hands together and ejaculated "It is finished." All Mahommedans of this part of the East, at sunrise of the day after Ramadan, proceed to the grave-yard with sweet cakes and coffee, which they consume on the spot, leaving the crumbs and surplus for the birds, whose convenience is further consulted by filling a little stone trough with water.

The mirage was very strong here, and, had we followed its deceptive invitation, we should have travelled miles out of our proper course and incurred the risk of perishing from thirst; but I worked with compass, and after four days of the same sort of country we were glad to sight Massouah. My feet had suffered greatly, and generally

I had been so altered for the worse that I was not recognised by the local Greek traders.

Returning to my old quarters at Massouah which reminded me of prison discipline, I found my old friends, the rats, as lively as ever. I was not, however, prepared for a most startling sensation which I experienced just before sundown. As I reclined on my bullock's hide couch, the roof of my room seemed to tremble with (as it were) a fearful rush of wind upon a sudden, and the strange agitation communicated to me a giddying sensation. On looking up to ascertain the cause, I found that it was the action of thousands of tiny bats simultaneously taking their flight from their day-retreat upon their night excursions; and their return in the morning was signalised by the same tempestuous rush. When settling down to roost for the day, their notes are curious twitters, which affect one, exposed as I was to so large a colony, twingingly. Occasionally you may see a white one in their company, but fawn-coloured ones are plentiful.

Complying with the requirements of the place, I called upon the khimekar of the town, who did not seem inclined, as I fancied, to be over-civil; but the only way to teach an Arab civility is to affect not to attend to him in the least when he addresses you, and to address yourself to some one else.

A fine opportunity came in my way here to study the opposite characters of the Banyan and the Arab. I was present at a commercial contest (I can call it by no other name) between two traders of these two nationalities

over a parcel of cotton goods; and it added to my list of singular spectacles. At first the Arab adopted a most coaxing style; his introductory flourishes were of the smoothest and politest sort. Finding that the Banyan betrayed no accessibility to flattery, he next took a medium course, in which a half-bullying tone was imported into the transaction. This also proving ineffectual, he became most violent, raising his voice to a frightful pitch and gesticulating wildly, so much so, indeed, that I made up my mind he was going to hit him. There was no little oddity, I thought, in being thus assailed over what was a purely trading transaction. But it was a treat to observe the demeanour of the Banyan. No contrast of temper could have been completer. He did not allow himself to be visibly disturbed in the slightest degree. Cool and collected, he suffered his antagonist to expend his wrathful energy upon him without remonstrance, until he recovered his proper frame of mind; when the Banyan obtained the prices he originally asked for his goods.

The Banyans, who, as I have before remarked, have established themselves here in positions of great mercantile importance, are a stately race whose majestic gait proclaims the assertion of their superiority over their competitors; and the Arabs are intelligent enough to be impressed by their passionless strength of character. I believe I may safely say that they have never allowed themselves to be seen at their meals. At one time they used at night to hold noisy meetings on their housetops, when tom-toms were beaten to the disturbance of the whole

neighbourhood; but the practice has been suppressed, and the Banyans now set an admirable example of civic propriety in every way.

One day I was looking out of my shuttered window when half-a-dozen eunuchs rushed into my room and, laying violent hands upon me, threw me on to my bed. I was puzzled to understand the sudden inroad, and certainly should not have been able to divine the reason for it, unless I had been informed, as by them I was, that I had no business to be gazing at the "sitts" in the harem which, it seemed, was located just in front of me. It was represented that the (ugly) ladies were very indignant, though, as I afterwards learned, one of them—a very pretty creature—had expressed her admiration of me; which circumstance naturally roused the ire of her owner, who insisted upon my not violating the privacy of the retreat. It was useless to explain that, as a cat might look at a king or queen, it was competent for me to look out of my own window. I took the shorter method of disengaging myself from their grasp and levelling two of them with well-planted blows, at the same time pointing to the French steamer in the harbour, and inquiring *Parlez-vous Français?* by way of making them take me for a Frenchman. With their usual cowardice they beat a hasty retreat. Eunuchs will jabber at you for the hour, but of pluck they are notoriously empty.

This harem was guarded by eight eunuchs and two Arabs; yet the occupants found means to defeat their vigilance. The heat of the weather not favouring excessive clothing, I used to lie in bed *in puris naturalibus*,

to the scandal (I fear) of sundry Arabs whom my cook—a mealy-mouthed fellow was he!—delighted to bring, to peep at me through the wide crevice of the door. It happened on one occasion that I indulged in a little gymnastic exercise on the beam of the building, and at its termination I went to the door to admit fresh air, when I surprised three of these ladies, who had been contemplating my noble proportions and agility. The discovery was surprising to all concerned. I fear I had no time to blush myself, and their veils prevented my judging whether they did; but most precipitate was their retreat. Their daring imprudence involved them, I apprehend, in trouble; as later in the day, when I suppose the escapade was reported to the Bey, I heard piercing shrieks proceeding from their domicile. Evidently they were paying the penalty of their transgression. And I need not add that the vivaciously indiscreet damsels never again enjoyed the privilege of witnessing my gymnastic exhibitions. I wonder if they have marked the day with chalk or with charcoal? Perhaps with both; the chalk to represent the joyous break in the dull uniformity of life, and the darker material to commemorate the thrashing they got.

CHAPTER XV.

TEL BASTA.—ZAGAZIG.—TANTA.—ZANKALOON.—CAIRO.

The arrival of the Khedive's steamer "Zaggaza," by which I proposed to leave Massouah, was a great relief to me. At this season of the year, Massouah is, I verily believe, the hottest place in the world. It is without a single tree, for even the acacia does not thrive here. I was glad indeed to step on board, and to find her, after she had delivered the mails to the Egyptian authorities, turn her head round, with me for passenger, bound on a three weeks' voyage in the Red Sea. The passage had few attractions, and unhappily I was deprived of the society of my friend Maccordock, the steamer's engineer, whose time was occupied in attending to the defective machinery, and who was the only Briton on board. Most melancholy was the mode of life of the captain and

officers of the Egyptian vessel. Betimes in the morning they began to pray, after which they had a small cup of coffee with a portion of Arab bread, dulcified perhaps with a taste of honey; and all day long they made the sailors pour water on their hands and feet, and reclined on carpets,—leading lives of unmitigated laziness. They positively seemed to dispense with food. For all their laziness, they can be savages when they like. While at Massouah, I saw the captain of one of the same line of steamers, who had, about four years ago, caused to be beaten with the kholbash almost to death his own English engineer, for which offence he was amerced in the sum of three thousand pounds. He was one of the most overbearing, self-sufficient, and impertinent scoundrels that ever lived; and his treatment of me was embittered by the recollection of that fact. It is but fair to the reputation of that magnificent Englishman, M'Killop Pasha, to mention that there would have been default of justice in this case, if he had not personally exerted himself to secure it for his outraged countryman by adequate representations to the Viceroy.

Most people would be driven to distraction by a voyage of three weeks with Mahommedan sailors. To me, however, who had recently gone through so much solitary travel, which is admirably qualified to bring out one's mental resources, even this was as a relief. They all strongly detest Christians, as much from ignorant fanaticism as from the necessity of exertion imposed on them by civilisation, which will have progress; for, if it were not for the active competition of trade, these "fellahs"

would pass their lives idly basking in the sun. But now they are forced to labour, and therefore acknowledge small obligations to their Christian rivals. I received a hearty welcome on my arrival at Suez from Mr. M'Cullough, and Mr. Henry Williams, chief engineer to the Viceroy's Navy; and glad I was, escaping from the dark range of Mahommedan intrigue and violence, to get back to Suez and shake the hands of my attached friends.

After a much needed rest of a few days, I made up my mind to cross the Desert and visit the land of GOSHEN. My passion for moving on could not suffer me to continue long in retirement. It took three days with camels to reach Ismailia; whence I had rail to ZAGAZIG. Availing myself of the hospitality of Mr. Clarke, in charge of the Telegraph department, I spent a couple of days here, during which I made the purchases required for my trip down the Nile. During my short stay I had the opportunity of witnessing some of the fanatical religious observances of the place, which their love of effect generally causes them to enact at night; when, with long processions of lamps, they go through the streets chanting their prayers. It is observable that men of about four-and-twenty are the prominent agents in these scenes of enthusiastic disorder. They seem as they grow older to become superior to this form of spiritual excitement. The hubbub continues through the night.

The Bazaar is a poor affair; and, but for the Greeks, whose mercantile activity is of the highest service to

Egypt, store supplies would almost be impossible of attainment; and this singularity is explained by the fact that Arab stores would only be preys to any Pasha or Bey in power.

There is a fresh-water canal conducted hither from one of the arms of the Nile; and the grain market is very extensive. Vast quantities of corn are sold here, seas of corn (to use Captain Burton's expressive phrase) being cultivated in the land of Goshen. Some little way out of Zagazig, the endless plains of Indian corn, wheat and cotton strike the observer as being beyond anything to be seen elsewhere in one district. Zagazig indeed is the Manchester of Egypt, with its extensive cotton-cleaning factories, in which the labour is by Arabs, boys and girls of all ages and sizes; the wages trifling, and, in the case of Bey or Pasha owner, intensely fractional,—next to *nil*. As for the due observance of time and attention to work, the bastinado is a lively teacher.

To Mr. Vetter, a German gentleman of great force of character who resides here, as well as to Mr. Hodgson, my sincerest acknowledgments are due for their unremitting kindness to me when I lay prostrate here from the effects of a severe beating inflicted upon me; which will presently form the subject of comment. And that reminds me of a visit with which I was favoured by a Mr. Dale, who had just returned from a fruitless trip to England, whither he went personally to complain to the officials of the Foreign Office of the impunity of sundry Arabs who had grossly maltreated and mutilated his brother. The only satisfaction he obtained was the

assurance, in the blandest of official tones, that the Foreign Office had never before heard any complaints against General Stanton and his Consular staff. The logic of that statement hardly impresses the *non*-official mind. The Foreign Office obviously does not recognise the possibility of any of its representatives ever doing wrong. *Humanum est errare* (Burns' "To step aside is human") is not a text honoured by adoption within its august portals; and it must be vastly comforting to its subordinates to think that they are not subject to the operation of those vulgar suspicions of peccability to which the mass of mankind are prone. In relation to this case, I am only recording a matter of notoriety when I say that the expedient by which justice was defeated was the simple one of making it appear that the one Arab who was caught was a Persian; and the Egyptian Government therefore, it was alleged, could render no redress.

When I state that Consuls of any nationality cannot be pressed for debt in the East, I give the reader a faint idea of the personal privileges they enjoy. What is more serious, however, is the facility thus given to the introduction of influences adverse to the maintenance of independence. The Foreign Office may be disposed, in its lofty way of looking at things, to scout the possibility of pecuniary complications jeopardising the security of these institutions. But, for the sake of argument, suppose the case of a Consul who is an inveterate gambler and horse-racer, and who in these pursuits involves himself in heavy liabilities with the Egyptian

population; I say, suppose such a case; and what is the exact value of the Consular office?

The ruins of TEL BASTA are very interesting, and here I made a valuable collection of bronzes: I dug up three, myself, of Isis with the infant Orus in her arms; I also secured some cat-headed deities in excellent preservation, together with scarabæi and ancient pottery; several of which are to be seen in the British Museum. It is a well-watered country, and the Arabs would soon acquire not only wealth but settled habits of thrift and industry, if it were not for the oppressiveness of the taxation, with which no degree of prosperity can possibly keep pace; the very means of their livelihood being forcibly taken from the unfortunate people—their one cow and one buffalo, with which they plough the land and turn the water-mill, carried off and detained till payment is anyhow made.

The town of Zagazig itself I should not pronounce to be healthy; the number of funerals I saw in it was oppressively great. The burial-ground is a mile out, and I need not say that of all melancholy funerals nothing surpasses the gloom of those of the Mahommedans. The virtues of the deceased, as the procession advances, are intoned by the men and chorussed by the women, in tones so afflictingly dolorous that one feels quite dispirited by passing one of these corteges. The number of flags used on these occasions varies with the social position and the rank of the deceased. They are carried by men on lofty poles, and have indescribable symbols of all sorts worked on them; and the green flag, typifying the

Prophet, marks the funeral of the male. That of the female passes off without any such distinction. Her body is quietly followed to the grave by women; without either chants or flags. Having no souls, it is not considered necessary to invoke the effreets for their safe conduct to Paradise. In the instance of an eldest son being buried, a bunch of flowers is placed at the head of the bier, and loud lamentation is made and the drum beaten, for youth is before age in the homage paid to it. But I had enough, and more than enough, of funerals in the town of Zagazig while I lay ill there for three months.

It does not become me, anticipating the chronological order of events, to narrate here the particulars of the barbarous treatment to which I was subjected at the hands of Osman Abaza, the sheikh of Sherweda; but I may just illustrate the direct result of the farce of justice enacted by the authorities on that occasion, when six out of six hundred of the cowardly assailants of Mr. Clarke and myself had various wonderful measures of punishment meted out to them.* Barbarians especially are emboldened by impunity, and that example sufficed to account for a most cold-blooded murder committed soon after. It was that of a young Copt who was going to the railway station with seventy napoleons entrusted to him by his Greek employer for despatch to Alexandria, and it was perpetrated in the middle of the day. The victim and his murderer lodged together, in the same house; but

* Seven murders were committed here within a month after the attack upon us.

that did not restrain the young Effendi, impelled by avarice and the love of dress, from destroying his amiable companion. He induced him to enter an Arab water-closet, in which was suspended a goat-skin for carrying water, the murderer knowing that the suspicion of the foul deed would surely fall on the innocent owner of the water-skin. He had previously secured a large stone, with one blow of which he smashed the lad's skull; and, after possessing himself of the coveted money, he lifted his lifeless form and thrust it down the cavity of the closet. In the course of time the poor water-carrier arrived for his water-skin. He observed a large crowd of flies, which come together as soon as ever blood appears, and, directed by them, he looked down the cavity and saw the body. Knowing the severity with which the law of Egypt connects murder with the accident of neighbourhood to it,* his fright may be imagined. He came out in a frantic state, and reported what he had seen. He was forthwith seized by the khavasses, thrown down, and beaten with two hundred blows, administered for the purpose of extorting confession of the crime; of which, however, though nearly killed himself, he stoutly asserted his ignorance and innocence. While this exemplary mode of discovering the murder was being enforced, it happened that an Italian, going into a shoemaker's store at Zagazig, saw the Effendi, the real murderer, buying boots. The Italian in Arabic inquired if he had heard of the dreadful

* Thus, if a dead body be found on a man's ground, he is held responsible for the murder.

murder of the poor boy, his friend. He betrayed no excitement, and expressed no surprise. This unnatural behaviour had the effect of arousing suspicion in the mind of the Italian, who communicated the circumstance to a very intelligent agent of the Bey. The agent agreed in his view of the case; he divined at once that this was the murderer; and accordingly he sent word by a khavass that he wished to see him and smoke a pipe with him. When he presented himself at the agent's, he was arrayed in clothes purchased by the produce of the murder. Being in the same sphere of life, he was received with all civility, and, as a special mark of favour, a cigarette, prepared by the agent himself, was handed to him. This flattered the vanity of the young villain, and conducted him easily into the snare. These social preliminaries thus agreeably arranged, the agent in his blandest way submitted the proposal—"If you will give me twenty napoleons, you may keep the other fifty yourself!" The omniscient and easy air of the veteran detective threw him completely off his guard; and he said falteringly—"I cannot give you so much, but you may have ten." Pressed to explain why the larger sum could not be had, he said he owed twenty for clothes and other articles. "Well," was the searching comment, "that leaves twenty to be accounted for still." He then admitted he had secreted twenty in the pocket of his old trousers. They were exactly what the agent wanted to complete the chain of evidence. He agreed that, if he found only twenty napoleons so secreted, he would be satisfied with ten for his share. They proceeded to the

residence of his mother, who was engaged, at the particular desire of her son whose appetite did not seem to be disturbed by the murder, in the preparation of a substantial meal; and, when the trousers were taken out of the box, they were stained with blood. When the hope was expressed that he put his wretched victim quickly out of his misery, he replied that it was the work of an instant, and that he executed it somewhat differently from the mode adopted by Osman Abaza towards the two Englishmen whose lives had recently been attempted.

The agent now inquired if the Effendi did not think this a very bad job. The answer was "No." He had been told that in the time of Abbas Pasha any one killing another would have been taken up a ladder and dropt down on to three spears; but now it was as nothing. He was bastinadoed, of course; his arms and feet being built into Nile mud, as if in the stocks.* Next morning sentence of death was passed upon him, twenty-four hours only intervening between the murder and the sentence, which had to be confirmed at Cairo. Within four days he was executed; on which occasion the women of Zagazig, blackening their faces and arms, paraded the streets in great indignation.

When the culprit was brought out of the mooderiah by the khavasses, he was thrust into a chair, his fez ignominiously pulled off his head, and his face violently slapped; after which he had to walk a considerable distance with

* This treatment induces great physical prostration. The culprit has one hand released for a quarter of an hour twice a day, to enable him to take his scanty fare.

a great rope round his neck. Arrived at the place of execution, the face-slapping was resumed. Soft-faced Europeans would have been almost killed by this slapping; but the Arab's facial toughness did not succumb to the assaults. Then might have been seen an official rushing on to the scene with a large document, which was the sentence of death, to be duly read to the prisoner. And now the work of execution did not occupy long. Thirty Arabs were impressed, who seizing the rope, which had been thrown over a beam outside the corner of a house in the street, proceeded with it to haul the body up. At every pull the body was jerked upwards, like a sack, the father and mother of the murdered youth cursing him at each jerk. It takes about twenty minutes to despatch in this way. Even as the body was ascending, a tremendous blow was delivered (not with the design of putting him out of his misery, but from sheer ferocity of cruelty), and his boots, looking too valuable to be wasted, were (during the up-hauling) pulled off by one of the numerous khavasses. There the body was suspended for two days, filling the neighbourhood with flies. Executions after this fashion take place so frequently that Europeans have been obliged to complain to the authorities at Cairo, to get the bodies taken down; else they would have continued to hang until putrefaction. The bridge of Zagazig is a favourite spot for these operations; and, when the bodies are cut down, they drop into the river and float thereon, poisoning the water the people drink.

TANTA, at a short distance from Zagazig, is the Assize

or Appeal town of this part of Egypt; and a pilgrimage to it, though not of the same virtue as one to Mecca, yet is esteemed highly; large numbers of Algerians especially, unable to bear the expense of the trip to Mecca, are content to stop at Tanta. Here annually is held the largest fair in all the East, and only Jedda or Mecca can surpass the fanaticism of the rites and practices thereat; and it will be easily understood that at these times Europeans incur great danger. The favorite mode of execution here is by strangulation, as it is practised in some parts of Turkey; the noose into which the prisoner's head is thrust being tightened by cords wound round four upright pieces of wood, like wickets, fixed at right angles and twisted to the required constriction.

The reference to Turkey reminds me that, in remote parts of it, a man is sometimes strangled at his own doorway amid the frantic lamentations of wife and children, the crime for which he suffers perhaps being selling by false weights. I remember a baker was once so executed for it, and his crime written over his threshold as a warning to others;—a summary mode of procedure: but, if justice does not take these violent courses in the East, it is neglected altogether.

Not far from Tanta occurred the notorious railway "accident" on the Nile, which really was a conspiracy to rid the State of a number of Pashas whose increase of power had rendered them objectionable. The Nile on that occasion was at its highest, and at a point judiciously selected in crossing the bridge the train, ingeniously disconnected from the engine, was overturned; when the

predestined victims were drowned, all save one, who, being a good swimmer (he was educated at Malta), disengaged himself from the carriage in which he was locked in with others and, diving, saved his life. Of course the Italian engineers, who did not sacrifice themselves, were officially blamed, and left Egypt for a year or two; but, when the affair blew over, they quietly returned and were received with honour.

I must devote a small space to the birds of Zagazig.

Nearly all the birds in the land of Goshen are migratory. Several tribes of falcons and hawks have been familiarised to the world by the British Museum, the authorities of which did me the honour of purchasing some of my acquisitions. Of king-fishers there are varieties,—the African as well as the blue European, and the black and white species, the same as I found on the Kuanza River in Angola, Central Africa. I need hardly mention the extreme perseverance of these birds; who seem to settle, in companies of four or five, on their own fishing-grounds, where they become so fat as to facilitate capture. Of the black and white species I got twenty-four. Snipe are most abundant; I never saw such vast multitudes of them before; and I have known my friend Mr. Clarke go out of a morning and bring home as many as 150. They are of exquisite flavour, and are most prized immediately after their arrival, it is supposed, from some part of Northern Africa. Quail also are very good here as well as plentiful; and I have seen 300 hanging up in my friend's house at one time. In fact, for two months in the year, *i. e.* January and

February, Zagazig is the place for the epicure to live in; and if he be not a sportsman, his table, I undertake to say, would be laden with all the delicacies of the season, if he lived anywhere in the neighbourhood of my generous countryman. Duck, widgeon and woodcock add their attractions. The spoon-bill duck is very appetising here; its flavour is very fine, and it thrives on lakes of from forty to fifty acres in width. The goose too is memorably delicious about three weeks after he has transported himself to these regions. He grazes on the tender beans, of which I have seen a whole field completely chopped off by thousands of the birds in a night, to the extreme disquiet of its Arab proprietor. Upon their first arrival, I have picked them up skeletons, evidently from the immense length of their flight from cold quarters; it was like handling bunches of feathers; but they soon become as fat as lumps of butter.

Comparisons, as Mrs. Malaprop beautifully observes, are "odorous," and where so many names occur to me, as I write, as those of keen sportsmen in Egypt, the credit of being the best shot is not easy to be adjudged to one individual; yet I have no hesitation in assigning that distinction to Mr. Clarke. Without question I hold him to be the best shot in Egypt. Mr. Vetter also, the cotton merchant, deserves commemoration as a zealous and energetic gunner; nor must I forget to mention Mr. Allen, whom I once saw bring down a brace of duck in surprising style. To him I am indebted for many a Natural History specimen brought to me as I

lay on my bed of illness. Mr. Day, of Alexandria, too, has the reputation of being an ardent sportsman. I should have done myself the pleasure of calling upon him; but his intimacy with Mr. Vivian, who never came to see me in my dying condition while he was in Zagazig, determined me to forego the gratification. His hospitality is the theme of local praise, his expenditure being upon a grand scale. I must record a small anecdote of him which interested me much at the time it was told to me, and made me wish I had known him. He telegraphed from Zagazig to his nigger cook at Alexandria, to provide a dinner for eight. The instruction, brief as it was, no doubt to him unfolded itself into proper proportions regarding the entertainment; but the supplemental direction was—"If a hare is to be got in Alexandria, buy it if it costs a guinea." All the merchants in Alexandria, however, are a generous class; and I really ought not to make an exception in favour of any one member. To Mr. Finnimore belongs the credit of being the best shot in the English Rifle Club in the same place. I am far from disputing his qualifications; yet practical results are what an Englishman falls back upon, and I know what I owe to friend Clarke in the way of food supplies obtained by his gun. I trust I shall be excused for the materiality of my views in this matter. At that time, confined to my bed as I was, my ideas all tended towards pot-luck. I used to look forward to my meals as the only forms of amusement open to me in the long, dreary days of my Egyptian Desert home.

I regret that I was unable, in consequence of my bad

arm, to skin perfectly two very curious water-hens shot by Mr. Clarke, which thus have been lost to Science.

A small excursion one evening out of Zagazig, in the company of Mr. Clarke, who was laudably intent upon the slaughter of wild duck, is stamped upon my mind by the circumstance that, as we went through an orange orchard, I plucked and ate one of the fruit, which happened to be of the bitter variety. This made me ready to eat the donkey I rode; without the aid of violent metaphor, it rendered me so intensely hungry that, longingly anticipating supper-time, I could be persuaded to take interest in nothing but the success of the sportsman; and, when supper-time did come round (I know it was advanced for my especial behoof), it certainly did not find me indisposed to address myself to the tempting entertainment, to which Arab bread and olives imparted additional zest.

I inspected several of the cotton-factories, of which one of large extent is the property of a local Bey, whose servant Felice is. He is the only Egyptian cotton factor of any importance, and is indebted for his success to the genius of Mr. Hodgson, the chief engineer of his works, and of Mr. Johnson, at whose suggestion he erected oil-crushing machinery, enabling him to make cotton-cake from the seed cleaned out of the cotton. This cake is utilised as fuel for the steam-furnaces; and, as there is no wood to be had to keep the fires alive, and as coal would be immensely expensive, the value of this substitute will be easily understood. The cotton-

cake, I learned, can be made at the cost of thirty shillings per ton, which is cheap fuel.

During my stay here a cotton factory exploded. It was the work, no doubt, of some jealous Arabs ramming dirt and stones into the tubes; for it is not to be disputed that, although these unbelieving wretches owe everything they know to us, they are utterly unmindful of their obligations to Englishmen. I will go further and say that, although they cannot do without us, yet, at heart, they hate us with an intense hatred. This is not a superficial impression. On the contrary, it is the conviction forced upon my mind by close observation of the national character, and the longer I was in Egypt the greater was its confirmation. How they will ultimately take to the Germans, will be determined by time. As yet their knowledge of them is not sufficiently advanced; but the overthrow by Germany of what they considered an invincible power has paved the way for respectful consideration, while it is instructive to find that French physicians and surgeons were summarily dismissed from their posts in hospitals, where their skill had acquired great popularity, in Constantinople and elsewhere, after the triumph of Fatherland.

I have heard talk of the liberality and generosity of the Viceroy to us. Perhaps I may be allowed to ask to what source he is indebted for the very means of his existence? But for English brains and English energy what would be his condition? England here has been schoolmaster to the worst lot of pupils in the world. No

terms can be too strong to denote their wretched character; which is summed up in one word—cunning. After all the discipline and instruction, however, their knowledge is but shallow; and to this day they would break down utterly without European help. That the Viceroy would gladly get rid of every Englishman in his service, I am perfectly assured; only he well knows that the whole State machinery would, in that event, come to a dead-lock; the entire system would collapse. Yet even he affects to believe in his own self-helpful resources; and I cannot help thinking that the infatuation is encouraged by worthless flatterers, who, to serve their own ends, minister to the spiritual intoxication of a despot. He is very boastful and very arrogant about his Army and his Navy: but what would the former be without the American General Stone; and what would the latter be without M'Killop Pasha for Admiral? Before these gentlemen presided at the head of affairs, there was nothing in the shape of organisation in either of the services; which had been constructed, it would seem, upon the model of the famous Coggeshall militia, in which all were commissioned officers, except one, and he was a lance-corporal.

The Pigeon Village adjoining the residence of the Pasha in ZANKALOON, seven miles from Zagazig, I must not forget to mention. It is the veritable abode of columbar love, built of Nile mud in the shape of minarets, and extending over a vast area; and, if I may venture to intrude upon the attention of Mr. Charles Darwin who has honoured me by quoting my travels in South Eastern

Africa, I can assure him that I inspected this retreat with very great interest.

For about three weeks in the year there is a season when the pigeons of Egypt are almost extinct, with the exception of those maintained by the villagers. I have not been able to verify it, as I hope yet to do, but I have a strong suspicion that these pigeons wing their way to the Desert to eat a small berry and the grit, which give them great digestive health and a plumage of (as it were) painted softness. The plumage, as we all know, in the case of the fowl tribes, is the best indication of vigorous health; and I have seen these pigeons killed in a few days after their return, when the closeness of their feathers resisted the discoloration of the blood. While on the subject, I may mention that there is a magnificent Pigeon Village five miles from Benha on the Nile, in which every hole has its pair of occupants; thousands upon thousands are sheltered here at the cost of the State. Their manure is prized for application to the growth of the cucumber. I must be particular to state that cucumber and tobacco are the only two articles to which manure is applied. For tobacco any manure is indifferently used; but for the cucumber the pigeon manure is exclusively employed. As for wheat and barley and Indian corn, the water of the Nile suffices, its slime imparting great vegetating virtue. It is curious, by the way, considering its slimy character, how long Nile water will keep sweet. For example, on the Khedive's steamers running between Suez and Massouah, which is a six weeks' return voyage, the water is as good,

without any preparation, and as fresh at the end of the trip as when first shipped on board. Indeed, it is a remarkable fact that Nile water never turns putrid.

But to return to the pigeons.

They leave the village in vast clouds about eight in the morning to feed, and return about half-past eleven. About one again they go out, coming back in the evening. These are termed the "wild" pigeons. They are shot by European sportsmen, and are different in both flavour and size from what are called, in contradistinction, the tame pigeons; which are kept by the inhabitants on the tops of their houses. Such is the difference between the two classes in respect of size and rapidity of flight that a tame pigeon is seldom shot.

Of the Ballard or tame pigeon an Arab cottager will keep about five pairs. For breeders they are the best in the world; they are associated with the family for years, during which there is no cessation of sitting and hatching.

There is a very large breed of what is called in England the Runt, but much finer than any I have ever seen in our own country. They thrive famously; for, not being of extensive flight by reason of being large-bodied birds, they suit the people. Another pigeon, of considerable value as a food product, is supposed to have been introduced by Arabs from Algiers. It is speckled, of sandy and white colour; and I take it to be a variety—able-bodied—of the Runt. It is a rare thing for Egypt ever to have anything new in the way of live stock, and the breed is a marked favourite. Here I saw the largest fan-

tails in the world,—birds of immense size; also the Red Ruff, a beautiful bird.

The Sacred Pigeon is a little blue pigeon, with red circle of eye and red legs, which is popularly supposed to sing Allah! a hundred times right off. Hence it is called the Sacred Pigeon. It is held in the greatest veneration by the Egyptians, whom it is impossible to offend more grievously than by killing one of these. Of course they never think of applying it to the vulgar use of eating. As is everything particularly attractive, the Sacred bird is held to derive its origin from Mecca.

On the Desert, where the Arab villages can supply the traveller with nothing but boiled pigeon, pigeons form the source of considerable profit. Chickens and pigeons, in fact, may be said to be the only means of ready money to the Egyptians; and need I add that they are taxed? They are not allowed to be taken into a town without contributing their quota to the revenue. But surely that is quite right and proper when even the washerwomen have their receipts operated upon.

There are two species of turtle-dove here. They arrive in January in thousands, and in stew yield a delicious flavour. There are also two species of what the Egyptians call partridge, whereas they really are grouse. Unlike that of ordinary partridge or grouse, the height of their flight is very remarkable, and their rapidity is equal to that of parrots. They are beautifully feathered birds, but I was sadly disappointed in regard to their flavour, which by no means compares with that of their European cousins. In these remarks I have not sought to claim

credit for scientific accuracy of exposition. My humble office rather is to record simply such facts of Natural History as came within the range of my observation.

The pigs of Zagazig must not be forgotten.

The Greeks, like the Irish, are very fond of pigs, though they are a deadly offence to Mahommedans. The Egyptian breed has two long teats hanging from under the neck, and is remarkably ugly; the ugliest I ever saw anywhere. I should class them as being of a wild nature. They feed on the refuse of the place. This filthy pork is made by their owners into sausages, which are sold in Zagazig, the Greeks having a strong liking for anything greasy. Their cooks are notorious for their singular ideas of flavours; and on the Christmas Day of their Church they indulge in tremendous feeds, which indeed are extended over two or three days, like the Mahommedans after the Feast of Ramadan. At this season it is considered a social obligation that they should be visited by their friends and acquaintance, irrespectively of religious distinctions. The Mahommedans have the same views regarding the observance of their great festival; and, if you fail to comply with the requirement, they very quietly ignore your existence for the future.

I was at Zagazig at the Feast of Ramadan; when nearly every householder or head of a family had a sheep ready for dressing. Early in the morning you see them seated in circles, like the Africans, many of whose habits may be observed here, and from whom indeed they are not much advanced. For over an hour they sit thus,

admiring the sheep hanging outside the door, the fat tail being the principal object of admiration. (This, let me say in passing, is one of the regions of the fat-tailed sheep; but they are very partial also to the little Asiatic-Aden sheep, which has the fat formation under the tail.) From simple admiration they proceed to congratulation of the owner upon possession of it; and after these ceremonious preliminaries the process of cutting it up takes place. As with bargaining, so with every other operation they conduct; they must have their friends to witness it; the company all talking at the same time and becoming quite excited over the prospect of a bit of meat. They consume the animal, entrails and all. The women never appear on the scene until the cutting-up has been completed; after which they are summoned to do their dirty work in the canal, to which they carry the entrails in baskets, the dripping from which they don't seem to mind. It must be confessed that these people make the most of their opportunities when they do occur. They fondle the meat, deriving satisfaction (as it were) from contact with it.

Only at the time of Ramadan did I see the women walking abroad with their husbands; and then they walk behind them, two or three wives amicably together, the son and heir led by the hand by the father, and the ladies carrying provisions on their heads, and their lord and master receiving the congratulations of passing friends and reciprocating their compliments.

It was on one of the days of the festival that a beautiful retriever dog belonging to my friend Mr. Clarke

went up to an effendi, coaxingly inviting to be caressed. The fact of being touched by an unclean animal, particularly by a dog belonging to a Christian, provoked his profoundest indignation, and he would have torn off his garments and cast them away if he could have purchased others. As he could speak English, I sought to pacify him by expressing my surprise that he should make such a fuss about a fine dog coming up to him. "For shame! for shame!" was the reply. "Why do you allow your dog to approach me at such a time as this?" And the conceited young creature thereupon began lecturing me in a most disgraceful manner.

It is easy to rouse the fury of fanaticism.

In this connection I can well remember an occasion upon which a Mahommedan was inveighing bitterly against the Christians. When he ceased, I approached him and, declining to discuss theology with him, desired to ask him a plain straightforward question, the answer to which his own experience would supply. "How is it," said I, "that the whole Mahommedan race cannot prosper without Christian rule? In spite of all that despotism, aided by the national character for avarice, can do for you, yet, without the stimulating element of the Christian, you fail to make any progress, or to benefit yourselves. How is this?" The man was taken aback. That consideration seemed not to have struck his mind before; but, after a pause of some duration, he admitted in a subdued tone—"It is quite true!" and walked thoughtfully away.

There is a famous butcher's shop in Zagazig. Whence

he gets his supplies I cannot make out; but he has provided me with really good beef and mutton, as good, in fact, as one could wish to have. In that respect I may say that I lived at Zagazig as well as anywhere in my life. He was a Greek (Greek butchers in the East are particularly clean), and he killed after the European mode.

Table luxuries plentifully reward the sportsman here; as the bill of fare on one occasion of my dining with Mr. Hodgson (whose kindness to me I shall presently specify) will proclaim. Besides capital joints of beef and mutton, we had a turkey weighing thirty pounds, a Desert hare, and wild game comprising duck, snipe, goose, and woodcock, examples of the Natural History of Zagazig, upon the table, and served up most temptingly. I shall not be violating the privacy of domestic life in mentioning that to Mrs. Hodgson all the credit of the culinary triumph belonged. With the intelligent industry of an English wife she has trained an Arab to wonderful proficiency in English cookery. It was an entertainment, the memory of which will be cherished by the writer of these pages; and it was appropriately brought to a conclusion with a jolly plum-pudding. I gravely question if there are many establishments in Egypt in which the like results could have been achieved with the same materials for so bountiful a spread.

I visited a village in the neighbourhood, the inhabitants of which were in a great uproar over the arrival of a very large Egyptian ichneumon, which they call the nimph. It was almost of the dimensions of a small

badger, and had committed sad slaughter among the poultry. The animal's bite is formidable, going right through the object it assails; it occasionally destroys large snakes; and no Arab dog will venture to face one. I once saw one glide into some rushes and snap up a wild duck before its victim could know what was the matter. As the villagers themselves could not destroy life, its career was one of unchecked mischief; and they knew not how to rid themselves of their tormentor until the arrival of Mr. Clarke, who soon settled the difficulty. The nimph abounds in this part, but will rapidly yield to the increase of cultivation.

Life in CAIRO is not unworthy of delineation.

As a very oasis in the Desert, as an institution that really fulfils what it professes to do, so efficiently and yet so modestly, the admirable school personally conducted by Miss Whately, daughter of the late illustrious Archbishop of Dublin, challenges and rewards attention. The social value of this lady is simply incalculable. Her refinement of mind and character, and the unaffected domestic simplicity of her English habits, stand out in startling contrast with the vulgarism rampant in what are called high places. When the Princess of Wales was here, she exemplified her judgment and taste in honouring this excellent lady with a visit. Civilisation's debt to her may be partly measured by the fact that the school is carried on with her own private means, chiefly. She does obtain some aid, I believe, from England; and sensibly enough, when help is tendered, it is not refused. Her practical aim, to which she directs an energy of character

incapable of being subdued either by Cairo intrigues or by Oriental lassitude, is to teach the little barbarians to wash themselves, and to sew and read; and she has Syrian Scripture readers to teach them the Word of God in Arabic. The work she has taken in hand Miss Whately discharges thoroughly and well.

Making my visit to Cairo *incog.*, I had a secret satisfaction in being able to witness the current of social life; which daily flows on the Shoebury road.

The General and his lady of course are conspicuous by their presence. Of the minor celebrities most notable is the individual who fills the important post of tooth-extracter to the Harem. Whether his duties are onerous I cannot say; but the reflection occasioned by the fly in amber arose to my mind at once when I learned that he had been only a common soldier in the English army. How exactly he contrived to achieve the leap from that humble grade to the perilous height of attending to the teeth of the inhabitants of the Harem would be a curious romance, I have no doubt; but there he is, and a mighty swell at Cairo he is. It may comfort my fair readers, troubled with visions of violent tugging at martial hands, to know that Circassian mouths can put up with stouter treatment than would be considered the thing in England.

The next carriage was not imposing in its contents, decidedly not; and I could not refrain from lamenting that England was so wretchedly represented in the matter of *physique*. Beside him sits his spouse, clothed in a low pink silk dress, and playing off all the airs of an ambassadress. The delusion was dissipated when I saw her

step out of the carriage. The hands and the feet forbade the notion of patrician extraction, and I was satisfied that people like these could aspire to nothing higher than the consular status. The male occupant of the carriage wore white kid gloves and altogether looked like a Frenchman off to a ball; but every excuse must be made for him,—a Levantine, born in Damascus; and it is hard to rid oneself of the influence of early training.

Nuba Pasha was about, surrounded by numerous attendants as all Egyptian magnates are, his retinue jabbering furiously as if resolved to talk each other down. He is decidedly an elegant man, and the impression I derived from this view of him, which afterwards proved to be a wrong one, was that he was kind-hearted. By birth an Armenian, he was educated by Mr. West, the consul at Suez, as I have already had occasion to explain, and is a good linguist. Several young Egyptians, I may add, are good linguists. They have a certain capacity for acquiring language; but they are perfectly devoid of original power.

The best people in the East now, free from the suspicion of adventurous intrigue, are the officials of the Telegraph Service. They are acknowledged to be the only absolutely honest department in the whole extent of the Viceroy's administration. This is unique praise; and I accord to it the distinction of a special paragraph.

The praise just recorded of the Telegraph I cannot repeat of the Railway service. While I was in the neighbourhood of Cairo, there was a prodigious commotion raised by the discovery that a number of Egyptian offi-

cials had, for a long time, been forging railway tickets, by which means they had appropriated considerable sums of money to their own use. Suspicion somehow fell upon one of them. He was without any warning laid down on the ground, and his behind assailed with 200 blows; which extorted from him confession of the complicity of two or three others. This was enough. He was put into chains while his confederates were sent for; and the bastinado soon made them confess the whole fraud. But the Egyptian government is not content with punishment. It must have the money refunded. Ascertaining who their relations were, they called upon them to provide the needful, and the needful they got, beggaring most of the victims in the process. Resistance is out of the question. The bastinado has peculiarly persuasive powers; and the bastinado they would have had until they made disclosure of their means. Indeed it would require a volume to do anything like justice to the terribly important part played by the bastinado. It is pervasive as well as persuasive. Even as Britons could never get on without the British Constitution, the Egyptians would lose their national identity altogether if the bastinado were not plied as widely and vigorously as it is. Suppose the order of an official on the Government railway to be disobeyed; the effendi is brought into the office; his trousers are taken down, and he gets fifty blows administered to him, with the intimation that next time one hundred will be the measure of his punishment. "If you will let me off this time, I will never do it again," exclaims the offender. The man laying it on

expresses the hope that he will not do it again; as far as he personally is concerned, he shall not do it again; but, for this once, why, he'll make him feel what it is like. And the thrashing is faithfully rendered. The khavasses, I believe, look upon their share in the transaction as a great privilege. Certain it is that you may see criminals who have been subjected to their operations salute them most respectfully in the street. A great institution verily is the bastinado.

Even literary property is not secure from invasion, or rather appropriation, where a Pasha desires to obtain the credit of authorship. It is seldom that lawlessness takes such a turn, which, simple and trifling as it seems, yet really affects property; but I know of a case in which a young Egyptian, who had been sent to England for education and had lived among us for several years, wrote a book in Arabic on 'The Manners and Customs of the English.' Tidings of the work reaching the ears of a Pasha, the MS. was seized from its author and owner, and the book published as the production of the Pasha. In the country of "the enlightened Khedive" the notion of redress for this or any other wrong perpetrated by a Pasha is to be scouted; and this gratification of literary vanity and ambition, I have no doubt, was regarded as one of the playful extravagances of power; but it was robbery with violence for all that.

Let me here record a fact which, of recent occurrence, does not admit of denial.

A dashing young Turkish officer, one of the gentlemen-in-waiting to the Viceroy, happened to be in the

neighbourhood of the court up which one of the inmates of the viceregal Harem was passing on her way to the Opera. Availing himself of the tempting opportunity, he stood and gazed at her; and the fair one, it may be presumed from her making no noise about the intrusion, did not object to the admiration. The vision, however, was too much for the inflamed youth, who could not restrain himself from laudation of the fair one's charms to a less fortunate companion. Tidings of the matter thus reached the ears of the Viceroy; whose jealous rage was provoked to such a pitch that he had him executed.

To prevent the possibility of such surprises in the future, care has been taken to adopt another passage to the Theatre; and for a long time the occupants of the Harem, owing to this mishap, were not permitted to enjoy the Opera. The Viceroy's jealousy is of ungovernable fury; and death assuredly would be the penalty of any European invader of the Harem's sanctity.

The eunuchs seem to atone for their effeminacy by their preternatural cunning. They are very tractable, however; and I can say that I have never yet seen an obstinate one. One singular privilege they enjoy is freedom from the bastinado; and in Egypt that may well be pronounced to be a markedly delightful exemption.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE OUTRAGE ON BRITISH SUBJECTS.

Zagazig.

About three o'clock in the afternoon of the 25th of November, 1873, I rode out of Zagazig on my white donkey. My only attendant was the Abyssinian donkey-boy, and the only weapon with which I was provided was a small stick to urge the donkey with. Mr. Clarke of the Telegraph Service had parted company with me outside the town, bound himself on a shooting excursion into the fields. My course out of the town lay over a road which bordered a branch of the Nile, and I proposed to visit the cotton factory at Zankaloon, the property of Ali Pasha; whose son, it may be remembered, married the daughter of the Viceroy. As I journeyed, I passed M. Mouriez on horseback, a French gentleman resident in Zagazig, and we saluted each other. I kept

on until I arrived at a turning which led towards the village of Sherweda. The wheat here was looking well, and I was taking a calm survey of the vast fields of it and riding leisurely along, when suddenly I heard the sounds of blows being delivered, and loud screams and cries for help. I recognised the voice as being that of Mr. Clarke from whom I had parted about an hour ago. I dismounted at once, and, dashing through some high-grown Indian corn, proceeded in the direction whence the cries issued. There I saw Mr Clarke being severely beaten by about sixty Arabs, who surrounded him. Advancing to his rescue unarmed as I was, I received a blow on the back of my head with a gun-stock, which felled me to the ground. While prostrate thus, the whole body of Arabs set upon me with narboots* and other sticks, and beat me fearfully. I soon became insensible from the cruel punishment; and, when I partially recovered consciousness, I found myself bound with ropes back to back to Mr. Clarke, and being violently dragged for a considerable distance towards a tree, our assailants continuing to overwhelm us with blows during the whole time. Upon reaching the tree, they soon made it evident that it was their intention to hang us. I need not say that long before this point was reached my clothes had been torn off me, leaving me almost in a state of nudity. A rope was now put round our necks, we still being tied together, and

* Stout sticks used by the Arabs in husbandry, to detach the soil from the plough.

the end of it was thrown over a projecting bough of a tree, up which they tried to haul us; but, fortunately for us, the united weight of our bodies proved to be too great a strain upon the rope; which snapping, we fell to the ground. But for this happy accident we should then and there have been despatched.

The person who took the most prominent and active part in this attempt to execute us was a Mahommedan priest and snake-charmer, who now seized a narboot and, spitting on his hands to secure his hold of it, hit me about the loins and over the lower part of my body until I was one mass of bloody raw. The pain was excruciating. Mr. Clarke said: "My dear Hamilton, they are going to kill you. For myself, I am in such agony that I don't mind if they do put me to death. All my concern now is for my poor wife and children." The blows came down on me so continuously that the pain left me no time for reflection. One of the ruffians, at this stage of the proceedings, urged my chief assailant to hit me over the head with a gun-stock and so kill me outright. This he would have done in the violence of his blind fury, there can be no doubt. But the absence of the donkey-boy was suddenly noticed by one of the slaves, an Ethiopian black. "Where is the donkey-boy gone?" he inquired; and, as though he anticipated the danger of discovery, he added, pointing to me,—"If you kill him, we shall all be killed; blood for blood."

This disapearance of the donkey-boy seemed to make the whole multitude realise their position. The proposition to finish me off with the gun-stock was at once

abandoned. But they did not think of releasing us or ceasing their violence against us.

We were then dragged to the village of Sherweda, a distance of about a mile, being beaten with narboots the whole way. By reason of Mr. Clarke's being much shorter than myself, I had partly to carry him upon my back; and, owing to the brutal force with which we were hurried along, I thought my arm was dislocated. When we arrived at the village, the population turned out; and, instead of coming to our assistance or relief, they hooted at us, and spat upon us, calling us "Christian dogs of Englishmen." We were now thrown down into a portico of the house of Osman Abaza, the cousin of the Viceroy of Egypt, the brother of the Governor-General of the Province, and the son of the late Minister of Finance. Here at any rate it might be supposed that we should have got protection. On the contrary, Osman Abaza incited the mob to further acts of violence. Every sort of indignity was cast upon us. The spitting was continued; the blows rained down upon our prostrate forms; and Osman Abaza's malediction of us as being "Christian dogs" was followed—as cause is by effect—by the breaking over my head of a Turkish slipper. Nor was the treatment of me simply brutal; it was also disgusting. All this time, from pain and loss of blood, I was more or less in a swooning state; and the general impression was that I was dead.

When Mr. Clarke told Osman Abaza I was the son of an English Pasha, the information was received with sneers. When he was told that my friends had extended

Vincent Brooks, Day & Son Lith.

SCENE OF OUTRAGE IN SHERWEDA.

every respect and hospitality to the Viceroy, on his visit to England, he answered that the Viceroy was nothing to him; that his family had set the Viceroy on the throne; and that therefore the Viceroy dare not say anything to him. The unbridled insolence of his tongue and demeanour was such as to defy description; and the ruffians, stimulated by his attitude and encouraged by his lawless example, continued to heap indignities upon me; spitting upon me, kicking me, beating me.

This treatment could not have been continued much longer without killing us outright; and the task of disposing of our bodies would have been the simplest in the world. With the ease characteristic of Egyptian officials, our bodies would have been thrown into the Nile, and a report issued to the effect that we were drowned in crossing it. But, however they meant to get rid of these evidences of their guilt, their course of savagery was arrested by the appearance on the scene of M. Mouriez, the French gentleman whom I have mentioned above as having been passed by me on my ride out of Zagazig, and a Greek. My faithful donkey-boy, who had witnessed the beginning of the assault, had started off to give information of it at Zagazig; and hence the arrival of our preservers.

Addressing himself to Osman Abaza, M. Mouriez, with a bravery that took no account of the number of our ruffian assailants, determinedly demanded our release. His spirit and resolution completely abashed the cowards. They fell back from our gallant deliverer; and the Greek proceeded to cut the ropes with which we were bound;

after which we were helped on to mules and, with the support necessitated by our helpless condition, conveyed to the Mooderiah (or Police Station) at Zagazig. There I was laid on a stone bench, insensible, for three hours; during which time the officials did not interrupt their game of back-gammon. With a devotion to the game which nothing could disturb, the Agent of the Bey listened to the evidence which Mr. Clarke, weak and exhausted as he was, was able to give; but he never so much as got up to come and look at my condition as I lay in the room. The Bey of the town, also, the brother of Osman Abaza,* never came near me although, as I firmly believe, he was in the village of Sherweda at the time of the outrage; which doubtless had his sanction as it had the active sympathy and encouragement of his own brother. By this time the tidings had spread over Zagazig, and the European population had come out in search of us. Mr. Hodgson lost no time in fetching the Government doctor (an Arab qualified in Berlin), who pronounced my wounds to be most dangerous. The blow at the back of my neck had brought on a dreadful cough, which he took to be a very bad symptom.

This was all we got in the way of official recognition at the Mooderiah.

From the Mooderiah I was conveyed to the house of

* Osman Abaza has since this been appointed to the Governorship of Zankaloon, from which post the Agent of Ali Pasha (*who called to see me and expressed his deep sympathy and concern for me*) was dismissed to make room for him; and further, a brother of his has obtained the office at Bourdain.

my friend and fellow-sufferer, Mr. Clarke, where I lay for several days in a condition little removed from death, with hardly any use of my limbs. The kind friends by whom I was surrounded* despaired of my life. My injuries were such that even the Arab doctor said the bruises and wounds required to be actually seen to be understood, and that only a photograph could enable those not present to realise the spectacle.

A telegram was immediately despatched to the Consulate at Cairo; but, on learning when I recovered my senses for a few minutes that no result had come of it, I directed another to be sent intimating that I should have Earl Granville telegraphed to if steps were not taken immediately to secure my (as I thought it to be) dying deposition. Even this was unattended to; not the slightest notice was taken of either of the two communications. The British representatives having failed to attend to the interests of Her Majesty's subjects, Nuba Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, three days after sent a messenger to apprise us that our assailants should be duly punished, and that we should be handsomely compensated for the injuries we had sustained, and complimenting me on my bravery in going, although unarmed, to the assistance of my countryman.

Thus it will be seen that the matter, neglected by the British representatives, drifted into the hands of the

* Among these I must not fail to record the names of the two brothers Hodgson, and of Mr. Allen, of Alexandria, who came up on hearing of the outrage; and my deepest obligations are due to Mr. M'Cullough who hastened to my relief from Suez.

Egyptian authorities; who were directly concerned in defeating the ends of justice. I invite the reader's attention to this remarkable fact.

Well, Nuba Pasha's Arab messenger arrived; and he, when my wounds were shewn to him, took up a patent linen-peg lying on a table in the room, and began to expatiate upon the advantages of the wonderful invention. All Arabs have strong commercial proclivities towards linen-drapery; and this man's thoughts were diverted from the proper subject into the channel of patent linen-pegs. He then lighted his pipe and had some coffee. I roused myself to the exertion of inquiring, as I may be pardoned for thinking I had a perfect right to do, "Why has not somebody from the Consulate been here before to take down my deposition?" "Oh!" was the reply; "Borg (the Maltese dragoman at the Consulate) said you were only some common Englishman or engineer." The reply characteristically pointed to the principle upon which the Consulate worked. My indignation at its brutality inspired me with strength; I acquired energy from the occasion. "God help me!" I exclaimed, "Colonel Stanton ought to be ashamed of himself to allow such remarks to be made at the Consulate. Colonel Stanton may or may not know who or what I am. It should be sufficient for him to know that I am an Englishman."

Meanwhile a Maltese named Felice, a servant of the Bey of Zagazig, who at that time held no official position under the Consulate but who *in December* was appointed Consul-Agent, officiously interfered in the matter; and,

by way of investing himself with importance in the eyes of the Arab community, he gave this delegate of Nuba Pasha a letter addressed to Mr. Clarke, requesting him to let the man see my wounds. Still, it will be seen, our case was in the hands of Egyptian officials with dark interests of their own; and it is but bare justice to Felice to say that he did not neglect the opportunity that presented itself to emerge from the obscurity of his station, and to curry favour with the powers that be at Cairo. Destitute of all authority as he was, and ignorant as he notoriously is, though plentifully endowed with Maltese cunning, he assumed a vast importance, and took good care to associate himself most closely with Nuba Pasha's delegate, whom he entertained under his own roof. The delegate had informed me of the capture of six out of the six hundred who had been concerned in the assault upon us. I demanded that they should be brought in chains before me, as I considered an example should be made of them. Felice, determined to have a say in everything, hastened to express his approval of my demand; "Certainly the prisoners must be brought up in chains." Presently I heard the clanking of chains on the stairs, and the wretches were ushered in.

I was very ill at the time, hardly able to move my hand up to my head; and excellent Mrs. Clarke, with the tender consideration which marked all her proceedings in this terrible domestic catastrophe, made pillows out of new cotton with which I was propped up, to enable me to recognise the culprits. One of them, let me say here, was an especial favorite of the Bey of Sherweda; and he

positively denied having taken any part in the outrage, further appealing to a deposition signed by one of the sheikhs of Zankaloon, who was bastinadoed with four hundred blows on the feet (which caused them to swell up to his knees) into the confession that this man was not of the number. The Bey's favorite was a man of considerable means, which it was desired to protect against possible confiscation. The Agent at Zankaloon, however, communicated the fact of the torture of one of his tributaries to Ali Pasha; whose influence with the Viceroy defeated the conspiracy and insured the poor sheikh against further torture: and I need hardly add that when, in spite of the bastinado-compelled deposition, the ruffian with the rest was put on his trial (as the mockery of justice was politely termed), he was represented to be a man of straw. This by the way, as a small instance of how they manage things in Egypt. But to resume.

No sooner were they in the room than I at once recognised the features of the priest and snake-charmer who had been my most envenomed assailant. He was habited with the green turban, the emblem of his sacerdotal dignity; which entitles its wearer to the support and worshipful entertainment of any village he may pass through. Determined to abate the scoundrel's evident pride in his adornment, upon which he might have calculated for exemption from any penalty, I desired that his turban should at once be removed, in my presence. He resisted the degradation; but, weak as I was, I was equal to the occasion. Raising my voice to the highest pitch I could then summon, I repeated the direction; whereupon,

the Arab delegate announcing "This is an English gentleman," a Turkish khavass forcibly removed it from his head amid the loud clamours of the whole multitude, who began to jabber in concert. There is no love lost, as I think I have already explained, between the Turk and the Egyptian; and the khavass, to add to the indignity involved in the operation, soundly slapped his face,—as I should have been tempted to do myself, I fear, if I had been able to use my limbs. The fellow's personal stateliness was now considerably reduced, as he stood uncovered before me, for he was, like all Mahommedans, closely shaven on the head with the exception of the tiny tuft which is left to enable Mahommed to pull the faithful into Paradise with. But with this satisfaction I got something more than I bargained for. The turban was alive with vermin; and with all speed it had to be tossed out of window.

With the recognition of this wretch I was satisfied; and the six prisoners were taken back to prison, greatly to my relief from the oppressive Arab smells with which my room was invaded.

Felice now had full scope for gratifying his inordinate ambition to employ himself most busily in the most laborious occupation of doing nothing; Felice, the Maltese servant of the Bey of Zagazig, who had no *locus standi* whatever in the matter, and who, if he had, could not read Arabic, and had only a smattering of conversational familiarity with the language, affected to take supreme charge of the case. It passes my power to explain what was done, or what there possibly could have been to be

done, in the interval that elapsed between this date and the day of the so-called trial; which took place about a month after. Egyptian justice, as we all know, is not apt to be so tardy where Egyptian interests are concerned. But, during all this period, neither the Consul General nor the Consul, nor any one duly authorised from the Consulate ever came near me; and Felice's assumption of official airs not only had the effect of provoking the ridicule of the Arab authorities, but reflected injuriously upon ourselves, since it shewed that the enforcement of the claims of justice in our behalf was neglected by those who should have been intimately concerned in seeing that the interests of Englishmen were duly upheld. Let my readers bear in mind, in reference to this cruel and disgraceful abandonment of their functions by both the Consul General and the Consul, that their respective residences were within two hours of Zagazig by rail. Let them remember that the Consulate had been informed of the dangerous condition in which I lay; and that this neglect of duty continued for *three months*. If I may not venture to define the limits of Consular authority, at any rate I shall be pardoned for thinking that I had a claim to be attended to; that I had a right to demand and to obtain the protection of the British authorities in Egypt; and that their total neglect of me—a neglect which could not possibly have been completer if I had been utterly non-existent—must compel a searching Parliamentary Inquiry.

After a month I was set upon a donkey and conveyed to the Mooderiah,—an exertion which, for all the support

with which I was maintained in my seat, nearly killed me,—where I saw the judge sent from Benha to investigate the case, a fine handsome old man of seventy. On my entering the divan, he rose from his seat. This was the first sign of civility yet accorded to me, and I felt grateful for it. He even insisted upon my sitting on his right hand; and he also was very courteous to Mr. Clarke. Felice of course did his best to accommodate his bearing to the occasion on which he assumed to himself unauthorised functions, and paid great court to his master the Bey, who was in attendance. A pipe, a yard and a half long, almost all of amber and ornamented with gold, was brought in to the judge, who lighted it and handed it to me, and then was supplied with another for himself; as were the rest of the Beys. As for Felice, his social and official standing was indicated by the fact that nothing in the way of smoking was offered to him. Presently in came coffee, which was served out in silver and gold cups not unlike our egg-cups. When it was offered to me, I affected politeness in waiting to see the old judge partake of it before me, whereas really I was not altogether free from suspicion that poison might lurk in the cup; but, when I saw him take it, I was reassured, and addressed myself to the excellent refreshment. While we were so engaged, the clank of chains heralding his approach, the priest prisoner was introduced in the custody of four khavasses. I signified to the judge that he had been my worst assailant, whereupon the judge directed him to come close. He fell upon his face and kissed the ground; after which prostration he got up, one of the khavasses fetch-

ing him a tremendous slap on the face for not getting up more quickly. The Arab rule being to treat you as what you are, and not for what you have been, the loss of the green turban exposed him to indignities of all sorts. He was ordered to stand back against the wall, and got well sworn at. Then was brought in the prisoner whom the Bey of Sherweda had vainly exerted his influence to save. To him succeeded a youth of about eighteen, whom a violent slap on the face toppled over to the floor, from which he found it somewhat difficult to get on his feet again, owing to the weight of his chains. Then another, who would have inflicted a frightful injury upon me but for the generous interposition of two Ethiopians. There was one, too, who I do not think had anything to do with the assault;—a semi-lunatic, who had been nearly starved in prison by reason of his relatives being too poor to maintain him at their own private expense, as the relatives in the district are expected to do. Slapping and swearing were freely dispensed to all the criminals, after the universally prevalent practice; which extends even to the witnesses, when they do not speak loud enough.

The room in which these strange proceedings took place under the pretext of a judicial tribunal was full of draughts, which, in the condition in which I then was, affected me acutely. The exertion involved in my removal to the Court had been more than enough for me; and I naturally was anxious to see some progress made in the real business for which I had been summoned. Through Mr. Clarke, therefore, I demanded justice as an Englishman, and expressed my unwillingness to see all this

knocking about of the prisoners, which was mere nonsense; and I particularly asked why Osman Abaza was not included in the number of the prisoners. To this inquiry Felice answered that "His Excellency" was in one of the adjoining rooms, and that he had admitted the truth of all my representations; and Felice shewed me what he said was his confession in Arabic, to which he solicited and obtained my signature: but the document was neither read to the Court nor interpreted to me.

We sat here for two hours, during which the old judge smoked and chatted about the rise and fall of the cotton market, varying the conversation with inquiries for Effendi This, who was reported to be at prayers; for Effendi That, who was reported to be at meals; for Effendi Other, who was reported to be asleep; and so on through a long list of people. Finally we were told that we should be called again, but no day was appointed. In about a week after this, however, quite late in the evening, we were again invited to attend; when the same process of smoking and talking was gone through in the presence of the prisoners: but no business was done. And, as if I had not already suffered enough in mind, body, and pocket, I was pestered for baksheesh by the throng inside and outside the Court. This went on for weeks. All the arrangements, instead of securing the despatch of business, seemed to be made for the purpose of serving as excuses for coffee-drinking and pipe-smoking; and perhaps there was a little excitement provided for the officials in ordering us about. During these hitherings and thitherings, however, it was a remarkable

circumstance that Osman Abaza's brother, the Governor General of the Province, should say to me:—"I am a particular friend of Mr. Rogers; I have only to address to him a letter in French, to put it all right";—adding the comment: "Twenty napoleons at any time will buy an Englishman, dead or alive." This, situated as I was, without the aid of the British representatives all through my difficulties, was calculated to stagger me as to the result of the inquiry professedly set on foot; and Felice himself, on the 15th of December, 1873, approached me with the following communication, which luckily for myself has been preserved:—

"Charles Hamilton Esquire,

I wish you will come as far as my house tomorrow at 7 a. m., in order to speak something about the affair before presenting ourselves to Meglis, and we will take coffee together.

Yours truly
S. F.
15/12/73."

In my anxiety to expedite the course of events, I went to the appointment, ill as I was, supported on a donkey by the donkey-boy and Mr. Clarke; the latter of whom, although he was in a room adjoining that in which the interview took place, heard our conversation. Felice received me with every show of civility; but I refused the proffered coffee, and desired him to speak the "*something*" to which he alluded in his brief but signi-

ficant note. "Oh!" began he, "I've been very anxious to see you. The delegate (of Nuba Pasha) says they'll give you a hundred pounds, out of which you must give him twenty and me twenty, leaving sixty pounds clear for yourself. All you have to say is that Clarke shot the girl in the ear; and he being a Telegraph official will have to submit; and all will be made right." To enable the reader to understand this reference to Mr. Clarke, let me explain that, in the teeth of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the original assault upon him was pretended to be based upon his having accidentally shot a girl of the village of Sherweda in the ear. I repelled the proposition with scornful indignation, and, telling him that this interview established the truth of the character I had had of him as a dangerous schemer, I immediately left him, and never held any further private communication with him.

On the 9th of December a telegram was despatched from the Consulate at Cairo by the dragoman Borg to Felice:—

"Let Hamilton and Clarke send in their claims for damages."

Our claims accordingly were sent in to the Consulate; for £1000 and £500. In eight days a despatch, which was hawked about Zagazig with the design of bringing us into ridicule and contempt with the Court then in session, was received by Felice from Borg, and shewn to us, in which he intimated the desirability of our

modifying our claims; and, upon receipt of this despatch from the Maltese dragoman at the Consulate, Felice addressed to me the annexed communication, which I copy *verbatim et literatim* :—

"Ch. Hamilton Esquire,

"Sir—I beg to inform you that I just received a despatch from Cairo, inclosing both the statements we sent for the claim of £1000 and 500 which should be submitted to the Meglis that is now sitting at Zagazig in the matter.

"I am at same time to inform you *both gentlemen* that you would better moderate your demands and I will submit to the Meglis the claim you will make.

"I beg to return you back both statements, and as you have to state your projects and observations you may as well state your claim in the same.

I remain
your's sincerely
S. F."

17/12.

Our answer to this was simply to renew the claims we had sent in. The despatch from Borg to Felice (*Arcades ambo, i.e.* Maltese both), in which it was intimated that we should modify our claims, was, as I have already written, hawked about Zagazig, and, being regarded as an official snub to us from head-quarters at Cairo, encouraged all concerned to treat us with open jeers and contempt. Felice himself joined in these demonstra-

tions of undisguised mockery; and, when I met him in the garden of his master the Bey, where he was smoking in the company of Nuba Pasha's delegate, he derisively asked me "What can you do now?"; and soon even the Bey took part in the humiliating "chaff" directed against me. Hereupon I addressed a letter to the Consul General, complaining of my interests being intrusted to the keeping of the Maltese dragoman at Cairo, who was acting in this strange manner with his fellow Maltese Felice, and invoking his personal interference. I regret I did not keep a copy of my communication; to which the Consul General replied (see Appendix) that he could "take no notice" of the remarks which personal observation of the mode in which the interests of a British subject were being sacrificed certainly warranted me in addressing to him. After this rebuff from the highest Consular authority in Egypt, intelligence of which soon spread all over Zagazig, I was subjected to the most outrageous insults. The middle of January had now arrived; nothing had been done; and it was only too clear that nothing was meant to be done; and meanwhile Felice had returned from a short holiday trip to Cairo, which obviously had not depressed his spirits.

My patience almost exhausted, I wrote to Mr. Rogers, the Consul at Cairo, on 16th January 1874, claiming compensation for detention. This letter (which together with all the papers in my possession will be found set out at length and in order of chronology, in the Appendix) was on the 19th of the same month acknowledged by Mr. Rogers; whose concluding assurance of his "sincere

sympathy" with me is admirably illustrated by the whole course of his conduct to me. It will be observed herein that I am for the first time told of the conclusion of the trial and of the conviction and sentencing of the various prisoners. Only when I press my claim does any such information reach me. I left Zagazig, prostrated both in mind and in body, for Suez; where on the 17th February—a whole month after Mr. Rogers' last letter to me—I received a communication from him, covering "a translation of the concluding paragraph" of the Judgment of the Court. Reserving for the Appendix such brief comment as this communication requires from me, I may here state that I replied to it on the 19th of the same month. Let me, however, ask the reader to note that, whereas I was expressly detained in Zagazig up to the end of January 1874 for the purposes of the trial then pending, the Judgment professes to have been delivered on the 24th of December 1873. The ramifications of Egyptian intrigue are such that I almost despair of carrying the intelligence of my reader along with me in the course of this narrative of my sufferings; but I meet that statement with a note from Felice himself, dated the 24th January, which shews that the "trial" (as it was called) was *not* concluded even on this last date.

In the foregoing pages I have set forth, as clearly as the perplexed and perplexing circumstances would permit, the full particulars of my wrongs. Through the kind offices of my friend Mr. Sheridan, the member for Dudley, the attention of Parliament has been called to the subject; but, owing to the lateness of the Session,

he was unable to do more than ask a few questions, to which the usual official replies have been returned. The subject, however, will not be allowed to rest there. A Parliamentary Inquiry into the conduct of the Consul General and the Consul is what I demand in the name of a grossly maltreated and brutally outraged Englishman; and I appeal to my countrymen and my countrywomen to give me the precious aid of their sympathy, and their influence towards securing for me the Englishman's privilege of FAIR PLAY. My health has been seriously undermined; and the task which I have undertaken, involving the exposure of the subtlest trickery and of the cruellest neglect, is very far from being a light one; yet I owe it as well to my own, as to the national, honour to drag these criminals before the bar of Public Opinion; and, with the help of all whose sense of right and dignity will impel them to strengthen my hands, I do not yet despair of securing their exemplary punishment.

> "Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just;
> And he but naked, though locked up in steel,
> Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted."

CHAPTER XVII.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

With heavy heart and weakened body I bade farewell to my numerous kind friends at Suez, and set my face towards England. The escape from Egyptian cruelty and trickery was a most grateful one, and the prospect of obtaining justice at home added to my enjoyment of the comforts provided for me by the watchful sympathy of Captain Kellick, the manager of the P. and O. Company, who generously put me on board that beautiful steam-tug 'Timsa;' to the captain and chief engineer of which I must not omit to record my obligations. In twenty-four hours we arrived at Port Said, where the warmest welcome awaited me at the hands of Messrs. Webster, Royal and Lambert, of the celebrated Port Said Coal Company, whose attention to the wants of my condition embraced every accessible nourishment. Their

cheerful society dissipated the gloom of my existence, their fun and spirits seeming to defy depression by the climate; and Mr. Baker, of the Ottoman Bank, gratified me with the exhibition of his valuable collection of Syrian glass.

As a singular example of consular humanity, let me record the fact that I followed the funeral of a poor sailor, at which, in default of a clergyman, Mr. Percival read the service over his remains. Mr. Percival had just assumed office; and this was, I believe, the first instance, known here, of poor Jack being buried with this mark of respect, whereat the Arabs, accustomed to seeing other treatment, marvelled not a little.

Port Said has become a very important place, the shipping that comes through the Canal being enormous; and, having regard to this feature of the locality, it is really surprising that an English clergyman is not sent either here or to Suez; between which and Port Said he might easily divide his time. There is a large resident English population here, to whom the services of a Protestant minister would be highly acceptable; and his adequate support would be secured not only by their contributions, but by the well-known liberality of the P. and O. and the Telegraph services. Mr. West, the Consul at Suez, enjoys a considerable allowance for reading the Church Service once on Sundays; but he is superior to the charity of burying any one who does not leave behind him realizable effects.

There is a large Arab Hospital here, maintained, as is every institution in the East, by European liberality.

The roughness of the Arab doctor to his patients is extreme, and is not very apt to impress them with his capacity for healing. I had a small experience in that way when I was in Abyssinia; where the fellow made me put my tongue out, and dug his finger into it with frightful severity. But, after all, I am not disposed to reckon the Arab practitioner much worse than his Portuguese brother, who thinks you should take a whole champagne bottle full of nauseous medicine. The Arab Pharmacopœia, of course, is unique for herbal remedies strange to the medical science of Great Britain.

I was witness here to a painful case of destitution. It was that of a poor fellow who, after a life of hardship in Australia in the capacity of a shepherd, was working his passage home before the mast. He fell ill with a severe cold on the Red Sea, and, failing to obtain the required assistance from the Consulate at Suez, came on to Port Said. He did not linger long in his misery; but all that kindness could do for him was, I am proud to write it, done for him by Mr. and Mrs. Percival, who took a room for him in the hospital, and saw to the provision of necessaries; Mrs. Percival relieving his weary wakeful hours by reading words of hope and comfort to the humble patient. He was buried in the European burying-ground of Port Said, which I do not hesitate to say is a disgrace to civilization, the coffins being rudely placed in small wretchedly plastered vaults above the ground, one over the other.

Even for this miserable accommodation the Arab government demands a large sum *per* body. No wonder

that my friends, when I called their attention to the indecent exposure of the coffins (the plaster, as at Suez, yielding to the influence of the climate, and the bones soon to bleach the Desert), used to express their horror of being buried here, and to say they should direct their bodies to be taken two or three miles out to sea and consigned to watery graves.

Not far from Port Said is an Arab village, perpetually familiar with the small-pox and violent fevers. Its proximity to the port is such that it is frightful to think of the communication of disease hence to the shipping.

The Governor of Port Said is a very unpopular ruler, under whom rows seem to be the order of the day. Captain Stapleton and Mr. Turner, while I was here, were attacked by Arabs, whom they had great difficulty in getting punished. The Governor's son, however, deserves to have a few lines devoted to himself. He was educated in Paris, and, as befits such training, is full of the dressiest notions, although I have never yet known of an Arab succeeding in putting on his clothes with the elegance of a Frenchman. Compressing his feet into the tightest of boots, he walks about in visible pain,—a martyr to excruciating fashion; and his crisp-curled locks, elaborately scented and unguentified, he parts with dandy precision both in the middle and behind. Altogether, he takes himself to be "the glass of fashion and the mould of form," and his faith in those delusions seems to be invincible by the rude shocks administered to his vanity by his less aspiring neighbours. He may

be seen promenading superbly with either a French or an Italian woman on his arm; but I don't think he has yet prevailed on an English girl to avail herself of the sweet privilege.

The steamer 'Alnwick Castle' brought me on to MALTA. The passage was a very boisterous one, and somewhat prolonged; but Captain Freeman's agreeable manners served to moderate its roughness. Very striking is the sighting of Malta by night, when the hundreds of lights disposed over the various points of the fortifications seem to spring simultaneously out of the sea;—a fairy scene to gladden the heart of voyager. Nothing new can be said on the subject, I am fully aware; yet I suppose I must mention that the greater part of the population appear to live by the rearing of canaries and the sale of inferior lace. Maltese lace with some is synonymous with excellence; whereas really good lace, as distinguished from the popularly vended article, is to be had only at one or two manufactories; of which it may interest my lady readers to know that the best is Borg's—don't start, ladies!—no relation of the Cairo dragoman; or I should not give him the benefit of this advertisement: but Borg in Malta is as common a name as Brown is with us. It is only necessary to mention General Sir Charles Straubenzee, the famous Crimean hero, as the governor, to understand the character of his rule; and social life is regulated as it should be under the presidency of his accomplished and amiable lady.

We experienced very rough weather until we neared

the Spanish coast, off which were several men-of-war looking suspiciously about. Hugging the coast as we did, the scenery was most refreshing to the eye, the hill-sides being clothed in the lovely cool green of Spring. When we sighted Gibraltar, as the captain predicted, a stiff gale prevailed. "The Rock" was in great distress over the melancholy catastrophe of the ship 'Queen Elizabeth,' which had been recently blown ashore in a hurricane, with large loss of life. She was one of a line of ships notably associated with disasters. As usual, these wrecks cause great profits to the Portuguese, Maltese and Spaniards, who here are neither more nor less than wreckers, as the Maltese are on the Red Sea; and "Lloyds" has a wide sphere for watchfulness in respect of them. A pretty sight was that of a Portuguese man-of-war which, coming into the harbour, saluted our flag. Though I have been a wanderer for twelve years, I never before witnessed another nation salute our flag first, though, of course, I have seen our flag saluting foreign flags at foreign ports;—a circumstance explained by the fact that my travels have mostly been in countries not subject to the British Crown. The return salute from the fort was of striking grandeur. The echo reverberated magnificently; and the precision of the firing contrasted strongly with that of the Portuguese, who do everything feebly.

Off Cape St. Vincent the weather became delightfully calm; and for the first time in my life I crossed the Bay of Biscay in a perfect quiet.

Dorsetshire was the first point on the English coast

which greeted my eager sight. At Dover the pilot took charge of us; and off Millwall I was rewarded with a hearty welcome from my dear friend, Mr. F. G. H. Price; who three years before this received me at Southampton on my return from Central Africa.

ADDENDA.

OSMAN ABAZA.

As a trifling contribution to the vast store of "Things not generally known," I submit the following Note:—

Osman Abaza has seven-and-twenty brothers, all of whom are Beys holding posts of considerable power in Egypt. It may not be uninteresting to the reader to learn that his sister is supposed to have been the woman who had the prime share in the poisoning of the late Viceroy; and tradition has it that, escaping from Egypt to Constantinople, she was rewarded for her services by being seized, tied up in a sack, and dropped into the watery grave readily provided by the Bosphorus. The story goes that, with an ingenuity highly creditable to the family, she got two boys attached to the household to support the corpse on either side, holding it up in a close carriage to cheat the people of Cairo into the belief that the Viceroy still lived, until she could communicate with the friends of the present ruler; whose obligations to the family, founded on so amiable a transaction, I have no need to dwell upon.

On the subject of Slavery, upon which the British mind is in such deplorable darkness, it may not be amiss for me to quote the following passage from a letter recently received by me from Zagazig. The writer, I can testify, is one fully qualified to speak on the dark theme :—

"Slaves are getting plentiful here. They come in great "numbers from the coast; and, as the ganger who has "them pays the government tax per head in Cairo, "nothing is said. In fact, Egypt is in a fearful state "at present;—anything to get money for the Viceroy: so, "should you want one or two, I could get you a mother "and bairn for about twenty napoleons. It is a disgrace; "but people in England get no reliable news of the "country. There is every prospect of a bad Nile this "year. The poor fellahs are again called upon for two "years' taxes in advance. If they can't pay, they are "thrashed until they confess every bit of property they "possess, which is then sold, even to the burnoose on "their backs. If that is not sufficient, they search out "relations till they find one who can pay.

"The other day about sixty men left their grounds, "houses and every thing, and went to Cairo, saying they "did not want ground, but begged to have work given "them, even to road-mending."

To those who meditate investment in "New Egyptian Loans" the following excerpt may be full of instruction :—

"The Viceroy is trying to raise a loan here (in his own "country) amongst the natives. For as low as £5 he

"offers interest of about four shillings a month; but "the loan is *for ever*; the principal never to be "returned. But it does not answer. Although it is a "despotic government, the people are not quite so green "as *that*.

"His latest circular was to this effect:—Any soldier "deserting, his father or friends shall pay £150 sterling; "but, if they like to buy him out, £100 is the sum "required. Now, soldiers here are pressed; consequently "there is great dread of soldiering. The soldier, there- "fore, has only to say to his friends, 'If you don't buy "me off, I will run away.' See the amount of money to "be collected in this way by the Government. It beats "loans at ten per cent.; and he gets fresh recruits as fast "as he likes to send the orders for any number."

My correspondent, let me repeat, knows what he writes about. He has the very best opportunities for observing both men and things; and his testimony is unimpeachable.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

Copy of Telegram from Zagazig to the British Consul, Cairo (despatched at 8 p.m.); 25th Nov. 1873.

Charles Hamilton and Charles Clarke have been badly beaten by Arabs at the neighbourhood of Sharwida. The former in dangerous state. Local authority has taken immediate steps to arrest parties. Will inform you to-morrow Hamilton's position.

(Signed) FELICE.

Copy of Telegram from Zagazig to General Stanton, Consul General, Cairo; 26th Nov. 1873.

Having been nearly killed by Arabs while walking unarmed yesterday, I seek your protection as an English subject. My reference of being an English gentleman is Child's Bank, Temple Bar, London. Am severely injured in kidneys. Until today no hopes of recovery.

(Signed) *Pro* C. HAMILTON,
C. CLARKE.

Copy of Telegram from Zagazig to the British Consul, Cairo (despatched 11.30 *a.m.); 26th Nov.* 1873.

Hamilton passed bad night. Report today.

(Signed) FELICE.

Copy of Telegram received from Consulate at Cairo (TWENTY-FOUR HOURS AFTER HAVING BEEN ADVISED OF THE OUTRAGE) *to Felice at Zagazig; 26th Nov.* 1873.

Egyptian delegue proceeds tomorrow to institute inquiry. Afford every facility.

(Signed) R. BORG.

[The reader will observe that it is the "*Egyptian* delegue" who proceeds to institute the inquiry.]

Copy of Telegram from Alexandria (despatched at 9.30 *a.m.), 27th Nov.* 1873, *to Mr. Charles Hamilton, Zagazig.*

Your telegram of last night received. Have instructed British Consulate at Cairo to send competent officer immediately to Zagazig to investigate complaint.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

[As will be seen by the previous telegram, the Consul General's instruction to "send *competent* officer" was executed by the Maltese dragoman Borg's intimation of the despatch of the "*Egyptian* delegue."]

Copy of Telegram from Zagazig to British Consulate at Cairo; 27th Nov. 1873.

Enquiry commenced, but Hamilton is worse.

(Signed) FELICE.

Copy of Telegram from Zagazig to British Consulate at Cairo (despatched at 11.50 *a.m.); 28th Nov.* 1873.

Mr. Hamilton better to-day. Particulars later.

(Signed) FELICE.

Copy of Telegram from Zagazig to British Consulate at Cairo; 29th Nov. 1873.

Doctor states to-day Hamilton out of danger, but far from recovery. Medical certificates by Egyptian delegue.

(Signed) FELICE.

Copy of Telegram from Cairo to Mr. C. Hamilton at Zagazig; 18th Dec. 1873.

Your claim for compensation being against private persons, not against the Egyptian Government, must be referred to the tribunal for decision. British subjects as well as others, when bringing claims against natives, must conform with the laws and customs of the country.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Copy of two Telegrams addressed by Mr. Hamilton, Zagazig, to General Stanton at Alexandria; 29th Nov. 1873.

I am sorry to have to inform you that it was just 24 hours from the time of the first telegram advising Cairo of the attempt to murder me that a reply was made by the Maltese agent at Cairo for Consul Rogers, stating that an Egyptian delegue would be sent the following day. This so alarmed me in the frightful position in which I was that it was only hearing at the last moment that you were here that prevented my telegraphing to Lord Granville through my brother.

Today my full faculties have returned. I hope you will be so kind as to ask for my deposition made (after 12, midnight) on the morning of the 28th instant. My thanks are due to the Egyptian Government Doctor, Mourad Effendi, for his great attention; to Showky Effendi for his great kindness; and to the poor fellah who saved my life near the village; and to Selim Beg, agent of the Mouderieh.

To these two telegrams General Stanton replied as follows:—

Alexandria,
Nov. 29th, 1873.

Sir,

I am in receipt of your two telegrams of this date

and am most happy to hear you are in a fair way of recovery from the injuries you have received and I trust you will shortly be fully restored to health. I regret however to observe that you are under the impression that your case has been neglected by Mr. Borg, who in the absence of Mr. Consul Rogers is in charge of the Cairo Consulate. Such I assure you has not been the case. It was nearly midnight on the 25th when Mr. Borg received the first intimation of the assault having been committed, and early on the morning of the 26th, the matter was brought to the notice of the local authorities and instructions sent to Mr. Felice who is now acting as British Consular Agent at Zagazig, and the fact of three of your assailants having been arrested that day proves that no time has been wasted by the local authorities in the matter. Mr. Borg was obliged, in consequence of the absence of the dragoman of the Consulate on duty, to accept H. E. Nubar Pacha's proposal to send an intelligent and expert officer to enquire into the case, and he has instructions to report to me the result of the enquiry without any delay. And I may assure you, you need be under no apprehension that the case will be neglected, or that a proper punishment will not be exacted from the Egyptian authorities.

I am, Sir,
Your obdt. servant
EDWD. STANTON
H. M.'s Agent and Consul General.

C. Hamilton Esqr.
etc. etc.

Of my answer to the above no copy has been preserved. It was dated the 5th December, and General Stanton's annexed reply bears date the 10th. Alexandria, be it remembered, is, at the outside, within four hours' postal reach of Cairo, as Zagazig is within two hours' railway reach of either Alexandria or Cairo.

Alexandria, December 10th, 1873.

Sir,

My absence in Cairo during the last few days has prevented my replying earlier to your letter of the 5th instant, the purport of which I confess I hardly understand, but as it would appear from your remarks that you are under the impression that the Egyptian Government are in some manner responsible for the assault made on you, I may perhaps be permitted to observe that, for my part I am unable to see in this affair anything to justify such an impression.

There can be no question that a most unjustifiable and aggravated assault was committed on Mr. Clarke and yourself by certain Arabs; these Arabs have been arrested, have admitted their guilt, and are now awaiting the sentence of the Court. Moreover an investigation has been ordered into the conduct of the sheikh of the village where the assault was committed, and I presume that in compliance with my instructions you have been requested to transmit to the Court, through the Acting Consular Agent at Zagazig, your demand for pecuniary indemnity for the losses and injuries sustained by you on the occasion; and under these circumstances I am at a

loss to see in what manner the course adopted can be considered unfavourable to British subjects, as suggested in your letter.

It is, I think, hardly necessary for me to offer any remarks on the concluding paragraphs of your letter, and I can only renew the expression of my regret at the ill-treatment to which you have been subjected, and the assurance that a proper punishment of the offenders will be demanded from the Egyptian Government should a satisfactory reparation for the offence not be decreed by the Court to which the matter has been referred.

I am,
Sir,
Your most obedient
Humble servant
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

My narrative of the case will supply all necessary criticism on the foregoing document. I will, therefore, content myself here with calling the reader's attention to the fact that the Consul General has acquiesced in the award to me (of course I have never seen it) of the munificent sum of half "the nett proceeds" of the prisoners' property valued (before sale, and therefore reducible) at piastres 1465, *i.e.* £12; and that, in addition to the impunity enjoyed by Osman Abaza, he thinks the trifling sentences passed upon my assailants "satisfactory."

The reader need not be troubled to go through the various letters I found occasion to address to the officials in Egypt. The replies submitted will speak for themselves. They have an eloquence of their own which abolishes the necessity of other reference. The burden of my complaint, which was so irritating to those who, as I fondly imagined, were entrusted with the solemn and responsible office of protecting British interests, was that my interests were being sacrificed through their inattention. The result of the proceedings, I am simple enough to maintain, shews that my interests have been, as I anticipated they would be, sacrificed; and I am, further, ingenuous enough to think that the documents most completely support that view.

Cairo, December 31*st*,
1873.

Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 29th instant referring to the assault committed on you some time since by certain natives of this country, and must express my surprise at the manner in which you have thought proper to address me.

You have already been informed that the matter is one for a Tribunal to decide and that the Egyptian Government is in no way mixed up in it, and you must be perfectly aware that the Local Authorities have taken the necessary steps to bring the offenders to justice.

When the sentence of the Court is communicated to me due information on the subject will be forwarded you,

but in the mean time I must beg to decline any further correspondence on the subject.

The Acting Consular Agent at Zagazig is under the orders of Her Majesty's Consul at Cairo, and if you have any complaint to make against that gentleman, I must request you will address yourself on the subject to Mr. Rogers, who will, I doubt not, make every proper inquiries into such complaint; but I can myself take no notice of such remarks as those made by you in your letter to myself.

I am,
Sir,
Your most obedient humble servant,
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

C. Hamilton, Esq.,
Zagazig.

H. M. Consulate,
Cairo, January 19th,
1874.

Sir,

Immediately on the receipt of your note dated January 16th, I laid it before Major General E. Stanton, Her Majesty's Agent and Consul General in Egypt, through whom any claim on the Egyptian Government must necessarily be transmitted.

General Stanton declines taking any steps to forward your claim in its present form, as the Egyptian Govern-

ment was in no way concerned in, nor responsible for, the outrage of which you were the victim.

You were attacked by private people. They have been tried, convicted and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment with hard labour. The Egyptian Government has therefore done its duty.

If however, in addition to the criminal trial, you desire to proceed against your aggressors in a civil suit for damages, I am quite willing to receive and forward your claim to the Authorities that the case may be heard.

In conclusion I beg to assure you of my sincere sympathy in your misfortunes at Zagazig.

I am, Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,
(Signed) E. T. Rogers,
H. B. M. Consul.

C. E. Hamilton, Esq.,
Zagazig.

H. B. M. Consulate,
Cairo, 17th Febry.
1874.

Sir,

I have the honour to inclose herewith for your information a copy of a despatch that I have received from General Stanton inclosing an Arabic copy of the minutes of the trial of the persons who attacked you and Mr. Clarke in the neighbourhood of Zagazig. I also inclose

a translation of the concluding paragraph of that document, which is indeed the summing up and sentence. Should you require the whole of the minutes, I will cause them to be translated for you, but to avoid loss of time I thought it better only to translate the verdict at present.

I have the honour also to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated Suez February 14th, complaining that one Osman Abaza has not been "made to make you due "reparation for his participation in that cruel and "dastardly treatment of you," etc.

According to the tenor of the few letters that I have received from you, you seem to confound the civil with the criminal part of your complaint. The persons who maltreated you have been condemned and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. As to your present allegation that Osman Abaza took part in the assault, I have never heard of it until now. In the minutes it is recorded that you deposed to his having ordered your release when you were found bound to Mr. Clarke, and that he sent some of his own people with you to the Government Authorities. In the summing up he is acquitted by the Tribunal. If however you have any desire to prosecute him either civilly or criminally, I will forward to the proper Authorities any representation you wish to make on the subject, if it be prepared in a proper form.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,
(Signed) E. T. Rogers.

[*Copy of despatch above referred to.*]

Cairo, February 9th, 1874.

Sir,

I transmit for your information the accompanying despatch which I have received from His Excellency Nubar Pasha, inclosing a copy of the sentence given by the court at Zagazig in the case of Messrs Clarke and Hamilton, and have to request that you will cause a translation of the same to be communicated to those Gentlemen for any observations they may wish to offer thereon.

I have etc. etc.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

E. T. Rogers, Esq.,
H. B. M. Consul,
Cairo.

[*Copy of Sentence of the Court above referred to.*]

TRANSLATION.

The Court having considered the above detailed evidence has passed the following Judgment.

Whereas it appears that when both Mr. Charles Clarke the English Telegraph Agent at Zagazig and Mr. Charles Hamilton had gone out for walk and shooting on the 6th of Shawal 1290 to Sharwida and Zangaloon, Mr. Charles Clarke had fired at a squirrel as he said and hit a girl named Sit El Nass in the ear with small shot. Ali El Digghi, Hassan El Awadee, Ibrahim Ibrahim,

Awadallah El Deeb and Hassan El Gharkân of Zangaloon came to the spot and struck the said Gentlemen—these Individuals had been arrested and sent to the Moudirieh—the assailed parties had been examined and the marks showed that the said girl was hit, during the verification four of the assailants admitted the charge brought against them by the gentlemen. Mr. Charles Clarke admitted his having fired and hit the said girl. Although both the assailed parties and the girl have been completely restored to health without any permanent injury in their bodies, but as the five assailants had the audacity of quarrelling with and beating the Gentlemen which action is contrary to the spirit of justice they are ordered to be sent to the Galleys at Alexandria vizt.:

The first one Ali El Digghi who struck with the Nabboot as also with the stock of the Gun and instigated the others to strike them should go there for Eight Months.

The second one Hassan El Awadee and the third one Awadallah El Deeb who were accused of striking with the Nabboot as also with the stock of the Gun should go there for six months.

The fourth one Ibrahim Ibrahim accused of beating with the hands and the like should be imprisoned for three months in the Mudirieh.

The fifth one Hassan El Gharkân notwithstanding his denial of taking part in the scuffle and the declaration made by the Gentlemen that they did not see him beating with the others but he having admitted that he was

present and witnessed what had passed and on the other hand his comrades having accused him of taking part with them in the battery he is to be also imprisoned in the Mudirieh for two months.

The imprisonment of the said five persons is reckoned from the 7 Shawal 1290 (26 November 1873).

With regard to the losses sustained by the said Gentlemen together with the cost of medicines amounting to Ps 2224/14 the said five Individuals being in possession of Cattle and other Articles valued at Ps 1465 these should be sold and the amount of their nett proceeds distributed among the said Gentlemen in proportion of the sum claimed by each, but the remainder sum of Ps 758/20 is struck out owing to their insolvency and the adequate punishment inflicted upon them.

Mustapha Hassabàllah and Ibrahim Garboôaa the watchmen who were on their duty near the Sharwidah embankment having neglected in arresting the assailants and putting a stop to the scuffle soon after they heard the report of the gun they are to be imprisoned in the Mudirieh a whole month. This and the preceding being in accordance to the spirit of the 2nd and 5th Article Sec. 7 of the Regulations and the 4th Article of the Circular published by the Ahkâm in Saffar 1275 there being no previous conviction.

Mr. Charles Clarke who should not fire arms in cultivated lands where shooting is prohibited owing to the existence of natives there and by his doing so hit the girl and might have killed her—this caused the scuffle to take place—he being a Government employé should

not ignore this prohibition he is to be warned this time.

The Chiefs of Zangaloon and the Guards appointed there are not guilty they being stationed at a long distance from the spot.

The Gentlemen having renounced their claim against Osman Effendi Abaza as no ill-treatment was proved in his charge he has been acquitted and his pretensions for reparation of honour rejected.

The gun having beén delivered by the Mudirieh to the Consular Agent for consignment to the proprietor and the Medical Officer having foregone his fees it is considered sufficient.

The Nabboot found in the scuffle should be impounded in the Mudirieh.

All other persons are acquitted as they proved not guilty.

Made and approved this 5 Zilkâdeh 1290 (24 December, 1873).

(L.S.) of the Tribunal of Mudiriet El Sharkîeh.

I am most anxious not to weaken the effect of a judicial document like the foregoing by the addition of superfluous comment. It speaks for itself, and will give the reader some faint idea of the impenetrable darkness in which I was left unaided to seek satisfaction from an Egyptian tribunal. A word, however, may not be out of place on the position of Osman Abaza in the trial.

Against him Felice took very good care that no evidence should be recorded. As I have already explained, my anxiety regarding him was set at rest—as far as the hideous perplexity of my situation would allow—by Felice's assurance that "His Excellency" had volunteered an ample confession of his guilt; and to this paper I was required by Felice to attach my signature. Of course, it was neither interpreted to me nor read to the Court. It is easy now to see what was the real nature of the (so called) confession; and, in looking over my papers, I have come across the following significant passage in a letter addressed by Felice to myself and Mr. Clarke conjointly, on 21st December last:—

"*Osman Bey has given his deposition* IN MY PRESENCE, *and I requested him to be found in case that* I *require him tomorrow.*"

Felice, it will be seen, arranged matters as he pleased. As this statement abundantly shews, he managed the whole affair with supreme authority, while I was not only ignorant of all that passed, but powerless to direct or to check him; and Osman Abaza's "acquittal" is the result.

Again: it is news to me to learn that the medical officer had "forgone his fees." It may be so; but I certainly paid them to Felice, who never ceased to worry me for their discharge; and, luckily for myself, I hold this receipt written out by Felice himself:—

"*Zagazig*, 15*th December*, 1873.

Received from Mr. S. Felice, Acting British Consular Agent of Sharkieh, the sum of eighty-one francs and

fifteen centimes for the amount of medicines furnished to Mr. Charles Hamilton.

Say Fcs. 81 : 50/100

(Signed) GLERICI."*

Now, unless the signature to this receipt be a forgery, the statement that the medical officer had "forgone his fees" is absolutely false; and, if it be a forgery, who is the author of it?

H. B. M. Consulate,
Cairo, 27th Febry.,
1874.

Sir,

I duly received your telegram and your letters dated February 21st, copies of which I have forwarded to General Stanton.

You ask me to fix a sum for your compensation. This I assure you is quite beyond my power.

If you are prepared to prosecute Osman Abaza, and can prove his complicity in the assault to the satisfaction of the Tribunal, it will be the duty of that Tribunal to fix the amount of compensation that should be paid. Of course you will be prepared to meet the expenses attending the trial, and will be present at the trial yourself or

* The name is somewhat hard to decipher; but this is as close a reproduction of it as I can manage.

be represented by some duly constituted agent to act for you.

I am,
Sir,
Your Obedient Servant
(Signed) E. T. Rogers.

C. Hamilton, Esq.,
Suez.

My correspondence with the Foreign Office may be disposed of by setting forth below the following letters received therefrom :—

Foreign Office,
April 10th, 1874.

Sir,

I am directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th March respecting the ill-treatment to which you allege that you have been subjected in Egypt, and claiming compensation from the Egyptian Government; and I am to state to you, in reply, that Major General Stanton has been instructed to furnish his Lordship with a report on your case.

I am, Sir,
Your most Obedient
Humble Servant
(Signed) Tenterden.

Mr. C. Hamilton,
Port Said.

Foreign Office,
May 23rd, 1874.

Sir,

With reference to my letter of the 8th inst. on the subject of the claim preferred by you against the Egyptian Government on account of injuries received by you at the hands of certain Egpytians, I am to inform you that a report on your case has now been received from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul General at Alexandria, from which Lord Derby gathers that the Egyptian Authorities did all in their power under the circumstances by bringing to speedy justice the offenders and sentencing them to various terms of imprisonment, with which you expressed yourself satisfied, except in the case of one individual; and I am to state to you that, under these circumstances, Her Majesty's Goverment cannot give their support to your claim for pecuniary compensation.

I am,
Sir,
Your most Obedient
Humble Servant
(Signed) J. V. LISTER.

C. Hamilton, Esq.,
25, Clarendon Gardens,
Maida Vale.

Foreign Office,
July 4th, 1874.

Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 25th ultimo, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to request that you will

state explicitly the nature of the charge of "receipt of bribes" which you prefer against Mr. Rogers and Mr. Felice, and for which his Lordship can find no grounds in the papers forwarded by you.

I am,
Sir,
Your most Obedient
Humble Servant
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

C. Hamilton, Esq.,
25, Clarendon Gardens,
Maida Vale, W.

Foreign Office,
July 15th, 1874.

Sir,

I am directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your further letter of the 8th instant, and I am to inform you in reply that his Lordship proposes to lay all the papers respecting your case before Mr. Rogers, who is now in England, for such observations as he may have to offer thereon.

I am,
Sir,
Your most Obedient
Humble Servant
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

C. Hamilton, Esq.,
25, Clarendon Gardens,
Maida Vale.

My narrative of the facts answers all these official communications by anticipation. There is one small matter, however, to which I would here invite the reader's attention. Lord Derby writes with evident satisfaction, inspired by the Consul-General's report, of "speedy justice." Now, it is not a little curious that the sentence of the Court professes to have been passed on the 24th December, 1873. Felice's letter, addressed to Mr. Clarke and myself, incontestably proves that *that was* NOT *so* :—

"*Zagazig*, 24 *January*, 1874.

Messrs. Hamilton and Clarke,

Please call here at Mudirieh, they wish to make some questions. I will be waiting for you.

Your's truly,

(Signed) S. FELICE."

It will be seen that *on* 24*th* January, 1874, the farce was still in swing; and, to say the least of it, among many remarkable points in the case, to which justice must be done elsewhere, not the least remarkable is the circumstance that I heard nothing of the sentence as having been passed at all until after, losing all patience at the frivolous and vexatious waste of time, I (on 16th January, 1874) sent to Mr. Consul Rogers my claim on the Egyptian Government for expenses of detention. Then only did I hear, in a gracefully allusive way, of the alleged fact; and it was not until the 17th February, 1874, that I had specific information of the sentence

professedly passed on 24th December, 1873. But Felice's letter rather stops the way of this "*speedy* justice;" the credit of which Lord Derby is so ready to assign to the Egyptian authorities.

Finally, the reader is aware that the chivalrous kindness of Mr. H. B. Sheridan, the member for Dudley, has enabled me to bring the matter before the Parliament of Great Britain. From the Mutual-Admiration Red Tapeism of the Foreign Office I never, at any time, expected to derive any satisfaction. It was but accordant with the prevalent usage, however, that I should address that department.

From the 'Daily Telegraph' of 18th July last I take the following:—

OUTRAGE ON ENGLISH GENTLEMEN.

"Mr. H. B. Sheridan asked the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention had been called to the attempt to murder an English gentleman named Clarke, one of the officials of the Telegraph Company in Egypt, and a Mr. Charles Edward Hamilton, another English gentleman, who happened to be passing the place where the attack was made upon Mr. Clarke, and who, attracted by his cries and the sound of blows, went to his assistance; whether, if his attention had been called to the circumstance, he could state whether it was true that these two gentlemen were beaten with a narbote and with sticks for two or three hours, and were then dragged by ropes the distance of a mile to the

nearest tree, with the view of being hanged, but that the rope breaking they were dragged on to the village of Sherwida; whether it was true that the band of Arabs committing this outrage was headed by Osman Abassa, the first cousin of the Viceroy of Egypt, son of a Minister of Finance, and Governor of the Land of Goshen, one of the richest provinces in Egypt; whether he had heard that upon reaching the village, Osman Abassa set the whole population upon these two gentlemen who, bound and almost insensible from blows, were exposed to every conceivable outrage until the arrival of Greek and French armed assistance; whether it was true that upon these gentlemen being conveyed by these armed rescuers to the town of Zagazig, the telegraph messages sent on 25th November, 1873, to General Stanton, her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt at Cairo, a distance of only two hours by rail, remained unreplied to for three days, and that no messenger or visitor ever came from the Consulate at Cairo during the whole time (over three months) that Mr. Hamilton lay in an almost hopeless condition at Zagazig; and whether any money compensation had been raised in the locality in which the outrage took place; and, if so, how much, and to whom had it been paid.

"Mr. Bourke, in reply, said that Mr. Clarke and Mr. Hamilton, who was staying with Mr. Clarke, were out shooting together near a place called Sherwida, when Mr. Clarke fired at a squirrel in a maize field. Some of the shot wounded an Arab, whereupon a number of other Arabs came up and severely maltreated both the English-

men. The attack was made by peasantry, and not as was suggested in the question. General Stanton, her Majesty's agent, received a telegram the same night stating what had occurred. At seven o'clock next morning General Stanton telegraphed to the acting consul at Cairo, and reported that the local authorities were inquiring into the matter, and that three of the offenders had been arrested. No time was lost by the authorities in seeing that justice was done, and the proceedings were watched by the acting British vice-consul. Subsequently the offenders were tried, and one was condemned to eight months' and two to six months' hard labour, another to three months' imprisonment, another to two months', and the guard of the village to one month. (Laughter.) No fine was imposed upon the locality. Mr. Hamilton had expressed himself satisfied with the sentences, except that in the case of the chief offender. Under these circumstances it was not thought that a claim for compensation could be supported."

Comment on Mr. Bourke's reply would be wasted. Only I ask the reader to note that the "*chief offender*" is Osman Abaza; against whom I struggled in vain to get Felice to put in overwhelming evidence of guilt.

I again appeal to my countrymen and countrywomen to help me to obtain a searching Parliamentary Investigation of this disgraceful business.

PRINTED BY TAYLOR AND CO.,
LITTLE QUEEN STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.